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FOR  
BIBLE CLASSES  
*AND PRIVATE STUDENTS.*

---

ST. MARK'S GOSPEL  
BY  
*Prof. Lindsay. D.D.*



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The gospel according to St.  
Mark







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REV. MARCUS DODS, D.D.,  
AND  
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*THE GOSPEL OF ST. MARK.*

*BY THOMAS M. LINDSAY, D.D.*

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THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO  
S T. M A R K,  
WITH INTRODUCTION, NOTES, AND MAPS.

BY  
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EDINBURGH:  
T. & T. CLARK, 38 GEORGE STREET.

1883





## P R E F A C E.

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THIS Commentary on the Gospel of St. Mark has been written with the view of supplying as far as possible the kind of information and notes required by the teacher of a Bible-class, where the pupils have in their hands the author's little fourpenny commentary, published by Messrs. Blackie & Son, of Glasgow. It does not pretend to be a critical exposition of the Gospel from a new or original point of view, and the author has made free use, always with due acknowledgment, of every available source of information.

The introduction, analysis, and divisions have been made on the principle of looking at the Gospel of Mark as a life of Christ. Accordingly, the Introduction includes a short statement of the political and religious state of Palestine during our Lord's ministry, and the Chronological Summary in the Appendix aims at giving that historical framework to the life of Christ which many of those for whom this book is specially intended have desired.

The writer has to express his great indebtedness to Mr. Andrews' *Bible Student's Life of our Lord*. The arrangement in the Commentary and Appendix is practically that of Mr. Andrews, with a few changes.

FREE CHURCH COLLEGE, GLASGOW,  
October 1883.





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# THE GOSPEL OF ST. MARK.



## INTRODUCTION.

### THE GOSPEL.

THE word Gospel (*God* or *good*; *spell*, discourse or tidings, εὐαγγέλιον) is a common one in the New Testament, and generally denotes the theme of the preaching and teaching of Jesus Christ and of His disciples. It is sometimes used by itself, as in such sentences: "Repent ye and believe in the *gospel*"<sup>1</sup> (Mark i. 15); "The *gospel* must first be preached unto all the nations" (Mark xiii. 10); or, "That the truth of the *gospel* might continue with you" (Gal. ii. 5); but more frequently it is the principal word in a phrase, as: "Preaching the *gospel of the kingdom*" (Matt. ix. 35), "*The gospel of Jesus Christ*" (Mark i. 1), "*The gospel of the grace of God*" (Acts xx. 24), "*The gospel of God*" (Rom. i. 1).

When our Lord was about to ascend to His Father, He commanded His disciples "to preach the gospel to the whole creation" (Mark xvi. 15), and the same injunction becomes in Matthew (xxviii. 20) an order to teach all nations "to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you," and in Acts (i. 8) a promise: "Ye shall receive power when the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." Preaching the gospel was to consist in bearing witness of Jesus, and teaching to observe

<sup>1</sup> Quotations are from the Revised Version.

whatsoever Jesus had commanded. The gospel was the message of the life which Christ had lived, and the apostles were set apart to proclaim it.

They were prepared for the work in two ways. They had been the companions of Jesus from the beginning to the end of His ministry. "Ye also bear witness," Jesus said, "because ye have been with Me from the beginning" (John xv. 27). They had been in daily intercourse with their Master, and had known Jesus so well that, when they spoke about Him, those to whom they spoke could see the Lord with their eyes, and hear Him with their ears. They spoke "the things which they saw and heard" (Acts iv. 20); and no one could be an apostle who had not "compained with the Twelve all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among them, beginning from the baptism of John, unto the day that He was received up" (Acts i. 21, 22). Had Christ's life and work been a part of earth's history only,—one small streamlet going with multitudes of lesser rills to make the mighty tide of time,—this human companionship would have been preparation enough for the witness-bearing. But the life of Jesus was more than a mere bit of this world's history. God was incarnate in the man Jesus of Nazareth; and a purpose of grace ruled His natural life. Divine knowledge was needed to aid honest human insight in order to know the Lord and declare Him. The disciples had to be taught of the Spirit sent from the Father ere they could know Jesus to be the Eternal Son. Their Master promised them this illumination. "When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, He shall bear witness of Me" (John xv. 26). They were prepared for their witness-bearing by their companionship with Jesus, and by the gift of the Spirit, who brought to their remembrance all things that Jesus said unto them (John xiv. 26); and their message was the words of men whose human insight was ruled and guided by the overmastering presence of the Spirit of truth, which enabled them to see and declare the Divine Saviour and His work of grace.

When a message had to be communicated, or an announcement

made, it was not the fashion of the times to write it down. No maxim was more faithfully followed by Jewish teachers than the one which said, "Commit nothing to writing." The master spoke by word of mouth, the ear of the scholar received the instruction, and his memory retained it; and such was the effect of the systematic use of oral teaching, that the memory retained it word for word. The apostles, at first at least, followed the usage of their age and country. They did not commit the gospel to writing, they preached it by word of mouth; and the accounts of their sermons, preserved in the Acts of the Apostles, show how they understood the command of Jesus "to preach the gospel," and what meaning they gave to the word itself. They did not think that the gospel was a statement of abstract doctrines, nor did they understand it to mean a complete biography of Jesus. They meant by the gospel a vivid representation of the purpose of salvation, as seen in the words, deeds, and sufferings of Jesus. "Many other signs therefore did Jesus in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye may have life in His name" (John xx. 30, 31). No fact more vividly testified "that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God," than the resurrection, and the earliest gospel was the "witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus" (Acts iv. 33; also Acts i. 22, ii. 24-36, iii. 15, iv. 10, xiii. 31). "The resurrection was the victory which the preacher had to proclaim; but the victory was the issue of a long battle, and found its outward completion in a triumph. Each event in the life of Christ contributed to the final issue."<sup>1</sup> The apostolic gospel began with the Resurrection, the most recent manifestation of Jesus the Christ; it quickly introduced the Passion and its cycle of events, and, working backwards over the years of the ministry of Jesus, soon included those details of the life of Christ which best represented the divine purpose in it, which are presupposed as known to the readers of the Epistles, and which are contained in our Gospels.

When the disciples met to choose a successor to Judas, they laid

<sup>1</sup> Westcott, *Introduction to the Gospels*, p. 170.

it down as a rule to guide them in their choice, that an apostle must have had personal knowledge of the life of Jesus between two well-marked points—the Baptism of John and the Ascension. When Peter preached to the household of Cornelius, he gave a short description of the work of Jesus, “which began from Galilee after the baptism which John preached,” and ended with His manifestation after the resurrection (Acts x. 37-43). When Paul taught at Antioch in Pisidia, he sketched the details of Christ’s life within the same limits (Acts xiii. 23-31). Everywhere we see, in the speeches recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, that the gospel of the first generation of Christians, the spoken sermons of the apostles, was a selection of representative facts from the many deeds and words of Jesus, made in such a fashion as would most clearly set forth the divine purpose of grace in His life and death and rising again. The Resurrection and Ascension were kept conspicuously in the foreground, the story of the Passion was told in detail, and a few incidents were selected which would fittingly relate the history of the life which preceded the death and the rising again. This selection of representative facts, which most vividly told the divine meaning of the life of Christ, was the gospel of the apostles, and formed the common groundwork of their teaching.

By and by, Luke tells us, many took in hand to write down these representative facts of the life of Christ, as they heard them from eye-witnesses, or as they had themselves seen and heard. In course of time, four of those short memoirs, two of them written by apostles and two by companions of apostles, appeared, and were received by the Church as the inspired apostolic account of the life and work of Jesus. The shortest of these memoirs is the Gospel of Mark.

#### THE GOSPEL OF MARK.

A tolerably well-authenticated tradition, dating from immediately post-apostolic times, brings this written Gospel of Mark into direct relation with that selection of representative facts about Jesus which formed the common groundwork of apostolic teach-

ing, and was the oral gospel of the first generation of Christians. Papias tells us, on the authority of a certain John, who was an elder of the Church, and either a "disciple of the Lord" or of one of His apostles, that Mark committed to writing the oral gospel of Peter. He says of the elder: "And the Presbyter said this. Mark having become the interpreter of Peter, wrote down accurately whatsoever he remembered. It was not, however, in exact order that he related the sayings or deeds of Christ. For he neither heard the Lord nor accompanied Him. But afterwards, as I have said, he accompanied Peter, who accommodated his instructions to the necessities [of his hearers], but with no intention of giving a regular narrative of the Lord's sayings. Wherefore Mark made no mistake in thus writing some things as he remembered them. For of one thing he took especial care, not to omit anything he had heard, and not to put anything fictitious into the statements."<sup>1</sup> Papias, it is said, died about the year 163. He was a hearer of the Apostle John, and knew many who had known Jesus and His apostles. He tells us that Mark's Gospel was made by committing to writing what the author remembered of the fragmentary history of Jesus, which was the oral gospel of Peter. Other early writers repeat in different terms the same tradition, until Tertullian was almost justified in saying, as he did, that "the Gospel of Mark is maintained to be Peter's, whose interpreter he was;" and we may believe that this Gospel contains the cycle of representative facts which formed the basis of apostolic teaching, enriched with the additions which the Apostle Peter was wont to make from his personal knowledge of Jesus.

#### THE WRITER OF THE GOSPEL.

John Mark (John, whose surname was Mark, Acts xii. 12) was intimately acquainted with Peter, and the apostle calls him in affectionate familiarity his "son" (1 Pet. v. 13). He was cousin

<sup>1</sup> From Euseb. *Hist. Eccl.* iii. 39; Clark's Ante-Nicene Library, *Apostolic Fathers*, p. 445.

to Barnabas, the companion of Paul in his earliest missionary travels (Col. iv. 10), and was the son of Mary or Miriam, whose house served as the meeting-place for the disciples at Jerusalem, and where Peter went after his deliverance from prison. When Paul and Barnabas returned from Jerusalem to Antioch, Mark went with them (Acts xii. 25), and he was chosen to be their attendant, or "minister," on their first missionary tour (Acts xiii. 5). He left them at Perga in Pamphylia (Acts xiii. 13), from homesickness or some other cause, and returned to Jerusalem. We find him next at Antioch, and in 52 A.D. he went with Barnabas to do missionary work in Cyprus (Acts xv. 39). Eight years later he was with Peter at Babylon (1 Pet. v. 13), and four years afterwards he was at Rome with Paul (Col. iv. 10), about to leave it for Asia Minor. The last glimpse of him is given by Paul, when the apostle asks Timothy to come to Rome and bring Mark with him, who, he says, "is useful to me for ministering" (2 Tim. iv. 11).

We are told by some of the early Christian writers, that Mark was with Peter at Rome, acting as his secretary, and that he was sent on a mission to Egypt, where he founded the church of Alexandria, became its bishop, and was martyred in 68 A.D. These stories, however, cannot be traced back further than one hundred years after Mark's death, and are very uncertain.

The New Testament makes it plain that Mark was so intimately acquainted with Peter, that the story of Papias recorded by Eusebius may be quite correct. The Gospel itself does not throw much light upon the matter. Peter is, indeed, often mentioned without any special occasion for the reference (i. 36, xi. 20-26, xiii. 3, xvi. 7); but other passages occur in which Peter's name is unaccountably left out (Mark vii. 17, cf. Matt. xv. 15; Mark xiv. 13, cf. Luke xxii. 8), where it is introduced by other evangelists. Mark does not mention the apostle's walking on the sea, the blessing pronounced on him (Matt. xvi. 17-19), and the "bitterness" of his repentance.

Canon Westcott finds in the character of Mark, and in his life and work, special reasons why he should be the evangelist selected to write down the oral gospel of Peter in such a fashion as was



most suitable for the wants of Gentile Christians. Like Peter, his course had been marked throughout by a restless and impetuous energy, which in later years sobered down into steady work and endurance. If he is, as many conjecture, "the young man" of Mark xiv. 51, 52, he followed Jesus at His betrayal with hasty zeal, and afterwards fled with equal precipitancy. He accompanied the first missionaries, and then abandoned the arduous work in which they were engaged. His hasty temperament made him ready, not long afterwards, to take part in the second journey of Paul. "The friend alike of Paul and Peter, working in turn in each of the great centres of the Jewish world, at first timidly sensitive of danger and afterwards a comforter of an imprisoned apostle, himself 'of the circumcision' and yet writing to Gentiles, Mark stands out as one whom the facts of the gospel had moved by their simple force to look over and beyond varieties of doctrine in the vivid realization of 'the Son of God.' For him teaching was subordinate to action; and every trait which Peter preserved in his narrative would find a faithful recorder in one equally suited to apprehend and to treasure it. The want of personal knowledge was made up by the liveliness of attention with which the evangelist recorded, 'without omission or misrepresentation,' the words of his Master. The requirements of a Roman audience fixed the outlines of the narrative; and the keen memory of a devoted apostle filled up the picture with details which might well remain in all their freshness on such a mind as his."<sup>1</sup> The oral gospel of Peter could easily pass into the written Gospel of Mark, his "son."

#### RELATION TO THE OTHER GOSPELS.

The Gospel of Mark is not the only written record of the life and work of Jesus. Four separate "Gospels" are contained within the New Testament Scriptures. Three of these are so like each other, and so evidently agree in recording almost the same incidents in somewhat similar language, that they have been called synoptical

<sup>1</sup> Westcott, *Introduction to the Gospels*, pp. 230, 231.

(*σύν, together; ὁψις, view*), because they look at the life of Jesus from a common point of view. In what relation does the Gospel of Mark stand to the Gospels of Matthew and of Luke?

It is natural that there should be differences between them. The oral gospels were spoken, and the written Gospels were committed to writing, that the hearers and the readers "might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing they might have life in His name" (John xx. 30, 31). Peter, and doubtless other evangelists, were accustomed "to frame their teaching to meet the wants of their hearers." This adaptation of the varied fulness of Christian truth to suit the needs of the widely-different types of hearers in which the old Roman world abounded, is reflected in the different Gospels. Tradition affirms that Matthew wrote his Gospel in Judea, for the use of Jewish converts; that Mark wrote his, perhaps, at Rome, for Roman Christians; and that Luke's Gospel was intended for the universal Gentile Church which it was Paul's mission to create. The differences set forth in these traditions imply divergencies greater than mere national distinctions; they bring it about that all the great aspects of human life are represented in the various Gospels, which thus present the one Divine Saviour in different outlines of His life, taken from different centres of human thought and feeling, and show the one gospel of salvation adaptable to the varied phases of the human mind as these occur in ancient or in modern history.

The Gospels were written by *different men*. The publican of Capernaum, the son of a lady of Jerusalem, the learned physician and companion of St. Paul, had distinct personalities, and the personal character of the writers of Scripture was never overcome or even obscured by inspiration. The Gospels clearly express the image of the Saviour's life which each writer had caught, remembered, and transmitted; and this personal colouring is not merely visible, but is an essential part of the Gospel.

They were written at *different periods of time* widely separated from each other, if the intervals be reckoned by "course of events and not by lapse of years." Mark in all probability penned his

narrative while "the disciples went daily to the temple at the hours of prayer;" John at all events did not write his Gospel until Jerusalem was in heaps, and the temple service impossible.

The remarkable thing about the Synoptic Gospels is not their differences, but their similarity, not to say sameness. No attentive reader can avoid observing how very few of the events in Christ's life have been preserved, and what a small number of days contribute all the incidents contained in the Synoptic Gospels. Christ's labours were incessant. Each day had its crowded history of labours, which left no leisure so much as to eat (Mark vi. 31); and yet, out of this wealth of material, three different writers have selected for the most part the same events, have arranged them according to one general plan, and have recorded them for the most part with a similarity of language which is marvellous. The problem of the relation between the Synoptic Gospels, is to explain their similarity rather than to account for their differences. Usually, when three men describe the same event, it is wonderful how few words in the separate narratives are the same. When three thoroughly independent biographers condense into three short narratives a life of incessant labour, it is astonishing how they select quite different events as representative, and how seldom they use the same language. The Synoptic Gospels, on the other hand, for the most part record the same representative facts in common words and phrases so curiously interlaced as to suggest that the writers have borrowed from each other or from a common source. Speculations upon the problem suggested, and theories to solve it, are almost as old as theology. Augustine, in his *De Consensu Evangelistarum* (i. 4), thought that Mark was "the humble companion and abridger of Matthew;" for fourteen centuries his opinion was followed by most theologians, and the followers of the Tübingen school and Keim were at one with the most orthodox adherents of seventeenth century theology on this point at least.

The criticism which arose in the end of the eighteenth century, and which is still going on, has eventually rejected this opinion; and the consensus of opinion now seems to be, that Mark's Gospel is the earliest of the three Synoptics, and that which is nearest to the oral

gospel of the first generation of Christians. The oscillations of New Testament criticism have been so numerous that it may be worth while to notice very briefly the various theories, and to state the grounds for supposing that in Mark's Gospel we have the earliest written description of the words and deeds of Jesus.

The various hypotheses framed to account for the sameness of incident and language in the Synoptical Gospels, may perhaps be most shortly and clearly put in a tabulated form.

I. *That one of our present Gospels is the original and first gospel, and that the second evangelist borrowed from the first, and the third from one or both of his predecessors.*

The question then arises, Which is the original Gospel? and it has been answered in the following way :—

a. 1. Matthew }  
       ↓  
       2. Mark } 3. Luke.  
 (Grotius, Mill, Wetstein.)

b. 1. Matthew }  
       ↓  
       2. Luke } 3. Mark.  
 (Griesbach, Paulus, de Wette.)

c. 1. Mark  
 (Either our Gospel or an earlier form.)  
       |  
       2. Luke  
       |  
       3. Matthew.  
 (Wilke, Hitzig, Weisse, Meyer, Reuss.)

d. 1. Mark  
       |  
       ├── 2. Matthew  
       |  
       └── 3. Luke.  
           (Storr.)

e. 1. Luke }  
       |  
       2. Mark } 3. Matthew.  
 (Roediger, Schneckenburger.)

f. 1. Luke }  
       |  
       2. Matthew } 3. Mark.  
           (Büsching.)

The very statement of the theories shows on what slight arbitrary and unscientific grounds they have been advocated, and indeed it is now almost universally admitted that the manifest relations of the Synoptic Gospels to each other cannot be explained on the supposition that one evangelist borrowed from the others.

II. *That all three evangelists made use of an original written Gospel more or less different from any of the three in the New Testament.*

Critics differ about the supposed original Gospel. It was, they say :—

i. *The Aramaic and earlier form of our Gospel of Matthew* (Meycr, Bleck).

ii. *The Gospel to the Hebrews*,<sup>1</sup> an apocryphal Gospel, from which our Synoptic Gospels came—

(a) simply and independently (Niemeyer) ; or

(b) in the following way (the Tübingen school) :

The *Gospel to the Hebrews* was the early Ebionite account of Jesus. From it came

(α) *Matthew*, by additions from a document embodying more liberal sentiments.

(β) *Luke*, which was (1) a protest against Ebionitism and in favour of Pauline Christianity ;

(2) re-edited in its present shape in a more conciliatory spirit.

(γ) *Mark*, which was a colourless combination of *Matthew* and *Luke*.

iii. *An Aramaic original Gospel now unknown*, from which our Synoptic Gospels came in the following way :—

Either 1. (1) The Aramaic Matthew. (2) Luke. (3) Mark.

|  
A Greek Version.

|  
The Matthew of the N. T.

or 2. *The original Aramaic Gospel* gave rise to :

(A) A Greek version and (B) a shorter Gospel.

(a) *Matthew* is the first recension of the Aramaic Gospel, but has also used (B).

(b) *Mark* is the second recension, but has used (A).

(c) *Luke* is the third recension, and has also used (A) and (B).

(This theory, in some one or other of its many forms, is a most popular one in Germany.)

iv. Several *unconnected collections of the words, deeds, and sufferings of Jesus*, written by the apostles or their disciples either in Aramaic or in Greek ; from which the evangelists made their own selections.

(This, in various forms, held by Schleiermacher, Credner, Semler, etc.)

<sup>1</sup> In reality much later than any canonical Gospel.

III. *That the writers of the Synoptic Gospels made use of a common oral gospel, in which a cycle of representative facts about Jesus were described in language which had become stereotyped by usage.*

Almost every German scholar of note holds some form of (II.), the "documentary" hypothesis; almost every English scholar of any eminence upholds (III.), the "oral" hypothesis.

The questions arise under this "oral" hypothesis, whether that common oral gospel can be traced, and which of the Synoptic Gospels most nearly approaches it and is the earlier. A means of answering these questions with something like accuracy has been furnished very recently by Mr. Rushbrooke in his *Synopticon: An Exposition of the Common Matter of the Synoptic Gospels* (London 1880), and has been made use of by Dr. Abbott in his article "Gospels" in the 9th ed. of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. Mr. Rushbrooke has so arranged the Gospels that the words common to all three Gospels can be seen at a glance, also those common to any two, and those peculiar to each of the three. The result is that a narrative, not perfectly but almost continuous, may be constructed by putting together the words and phrases common to all the three. For example, taking Mark's Gospel and putting down in order the words common to all three evangelists, the result is as follows<sup>1</sup>:—

Esaias the prophet || the voice of  
one crying in the wilderness, Make  
ye ready the way of the Lord,  
make his paths straight.

John | in the wilderness |  
preached | repent | All went  
forth | to be baptized by him ||  
There cometh | he that is mightier  
than I, the latchet of whose shoes  
I am not worthy | to loose. I

The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ,  
the Son of God. Even as it is written in  
*Isaiah the prophet*, Behold, I send my messenger  
before thy face, who shall prepare thy  
way; *The voice of one crying in the wilderness*,  
*Make ye ready the way of the Lord, make*  
*his paths straight*;

*John* came, who baptized *in the wilderness*  
and *preached* the baptism of *repentance* unto  
remission of sins. And *there went out* unto  
him *all* the country of Judæa, and all they of  
Jerusalem; and they were *baptized of him* in  
the river Jordan, confessing their sins. And

<sup>1</sup> The left-hand column gives the common groundwork of the three Synoptic Gospels; the right-hand column, the Gospel of Mark according to the Revised Version. The words in *italics* in the first column are added to complete the sense; | signifies a gap in Mark, || a larger gap. Cf. *Encycl. Brit.* vol. x. p. 792.

baptized you with water | he shall  
baptize you with the Holy Ghost ||

John was clothed with camel's hair, and had a leathern girdle about his loins, and did eat locusts and wild honey. And he preached, saying, *There cometh after me he that is mightier than I, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose. I baptized you with water; but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost.*

Jesus was baptized ||  
The heavens | and the Spirit as a  
dove descending upon him; and  
a voice | out of the heavens | My  
beloved Son, in thee I am well  
pleased |

And it came to pass in those days that *Jesus* came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in the Jordan. And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw *the heavens* rent asunder, and *the Spirit* as a dove descending upon him; and a voice came out of the heavens, Thou art my beloved Son, in thee I am well pleased.

The Spirit drives him into the  
wilderness | forty days tempted of  
Satan ||

And straightway *the Spirit* driveth him forth into the wilderness. And he was in the wilderness forty days tempted of Satan; and he was with the wild beasts, and the angels ministered unto him.

He came into Galilee ||

Now after that John was delivered up, *Jesus* came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe in the gospel.

Cometh into the house of Simon |  
step-mother | sick of a fever ||  
And the fever left her | she  
ministered to them ||

And straightway, when they were come out of the synagogue, they came into the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. Now Simon's wife's mother lay sick of a fever; and straightway they tell him of her: and he came and took her by the hand and raised her up; and the fever left her, and she ministered unto them.

He healed ||

And at even, when the sun did set, they brought unto him all that were sick, and they that were possessed with devils. And all the city was gathered together at the door. And he healed many that were sick with divers diseases, and cast out many devils; and he suffered not the devils to speak, because they knew him. Omit vv. 35-38.

He preached in the synagogues  
of Galilee || There cometh | a  
leper | saying unto him, If thou  
wilt, thou canst make me clean.  
And he stretched forth his hand

Ver. 39. And he went into their synagogues throughout all Galilee, preaching and casting out devils. And there cometh to him a leper, beseeching him, and kneeling down to him, and saying unto him, *If thou wilt, thou canst*

and touched him, | I will, be thou made clean. And straightway *there departed* from him the leprosy || And *he saith* unto him, | Say nothing to any man, but | show thyself to the priest, and offer | *that which* Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them ||

And they come bringing unto him a man sick of the palsy ||

And | seeing their faith he said | thy sins are forgiven || The scribes *said*, | This man | blasphemeth ||

Jesus | saith unto them, Why reason *ye* | in your hearts. Whether is easier to say, | Thy sins are forgiven, or to say, Arise, take up thy bed ||

*go* to thy house. And | having taken it up he went || And they glorified God ||

And | *he saw* one sitting at the place of toll, and said unto him, Follow me; and he arose and followed him. And he feasted him in his house | and many publicans | were feasting || And the

*make me clean.* And being moved with compassion, *he stretched forth his hand, and touched him*, and saith unto him, *I will, be thou made clean.* And straightway the leprosy separated from him, and he was made clean. And he strictly charged him, and straightway sent him out, and saith unto him, See thou say nothing to any man: but go thy way, show thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing the things which Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them. Omit ver. 45—ch. ii. 2.

Ch. ii. 3. *And they come bringing unto him a man sick of the palsy*, borne of four. And when they could not come nigh unto him for the crowd, they uncovered the roof where he was: and when they had broken it up, they let down the bed whereon the sick of the palsy lay. And Jesus seeing their faith, saith unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins are forgiven. But there were certain of the scribes sitting there and reasoning in their hearts, Why doth *this man* thus speak? He blasphemeth: who can forgive sins but one, even God? And straightway Jesus, perceiving in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, saith unto them, Why reason ye these things in your hearts? Whether is easier, to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins are forgiven; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins (he saith to the sick of the palsy), I say unto thee, Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thy house. And he arose, and straightway took up his bed, and went forth before them all; insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion.

And he went forth again by the sea-side; and all the multitude resorted unto him, and he taught them. And as he passed by, he saw Levi the son of Alphæus sitting at the place of toll, and he saith unto him, Follow me. And he arose and followed him. And it came to pass that he was sitting at meat in his house, and many publicans and sinners



Pharisees | said to his disciples, Why eat with publicans and sinners? | He said to them, They that are whole have no need of a physician, but they that are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.

*sat down* with Jesus and his disciples ; for there were many, and they followed him. *And* the scribes of *the Pharisees*, when they saw that he was eating with the sinners and publicans, *said unto his disciples*, He *eateth* and drinketh *with publicans and sinners*. And when Jesus heard it, *he saith unto them*, *They that are whole have no need of a physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.*

This narrative of the matter common to the three Synoptic Gospels might be carried on to the end, but enough has been quoted to show its character. It is not a perfectly continuous narrative. If it were, it would be a written document, and the theory that the evangelists had used a common original written Gospel would be correct. It is an *almost* continuous narrative, such as an oral gospel might be supposed to have been. Further examination discloses these things about it :—

- 1st. It begins with the Baptism of John and ends with the Resurrection, the limits of the oral apostolic gospel stated by Peter, p. 14.
- 2nd. It dwells at comparative length on the Passion of Jesus.
- 3rd. It contains few of the parables and of the long discourses of our Lord. The sayings of Jesus recorded are short, pithy, abrupt,—many of them polemical, some of them revealing the deep spiritual plan of the new kingdom.
- 4th. It is full of the deeds of Jesus, and contains a large proportion of His miraculous cures and manifestations of His power—the feeding of the five thousand, the stilling of the storm, and the transfiguration.
- 5th. It is rather a collection of dialogues and anecdotes than a set biography.
- 6th. It contains such a picture of Jesus as may be gathered, in still more condensed form, from the Epistles of the New Testament.

In short, this oral gospel, or common synoptic groundwork, has all the characteristics which the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles

tell us belonged to the proclamation of the gospel made by the apostles.

It is most interesting and instructive to notice, that most of the characteristics of this oral gospel are also peculiarities of the Gospel of Mark, and distinguish that Gospel from those of Matthew and Luke. Earlier scholars took this to mean that Mark's Gospel is simply an abbreviation of one or both of the other Synoptics, but this theory is now rejected by almost every critic of note; and Mr. Rushbrooke's Synopticon furnishes ample materials for an argument which has almost scientific certitude, that Mark did not borrow from Matthew and Luke, and that these two evangelists, though clearly influenced by some form of Mark, yet probably borrowed, not from Mark, but from some original upon which Mark was based.<sup>1</sup> If this be the case, then Mark's Gospel, corresponding so closely to the oral gospel of the apostles, is not merely the earliest of the three, but contains that way of presenting the evangel of Christ which was contained in the earliest apostolic preaching. When we read Mark's Gospel, we can almost hear those descriptions of Jesus and His mission, which the apostles gave to the very first generation of the Christian Church, in the very words which were addressed to them. The relation, therefore, in which this Gospel of Mark stands to the other Gospels may be briefly said to be, that it is the earliest, that it comes nearest to the oral gospel of early apostolic preaching, and that the other Gospels are enlargements and rearrangements of this earlier vivid picture of our Lord and His work.

#### THE CHARACTERISTICS OF MARK'S GOSPEL.

I. Mark's Gospel is confined within the limits of the earlier apostolic preaching, as these are stated by Peter in his speech to Cornelius (Acts x. 36-42), and are laid down in describing the conditions of call to the apostolate (Acts i. 21, 22). It begins with the Baptism of John and ends with the Resurrection. It does not contain the gospel of the infancy or the genealogies of our Lord.

<sup>1</sup> *Encycl. Brit.* 9th ed. vol. x. pp. 790-792.

2. Mark gives full and graphic accounts of the deeds of Jesus, while he compresses His words and sermons into the shortest space. In this he follows closely the oral gospel, the common groundwork of the Synoptic Gospels. His aim seems to be to picture Jesus the mighty worker of miracles, and to impress his hearers with the rapid, ceaseless energy of the Saviour as He preached the message of the kingdom throughout crowded Galilee. The phrase *And straightway* occurs twenty-seven times in the Gospel.

3. Mark's narrative is full of minute graphic touches; he has seen himself, or been told by an eye-witness, the things he describes.

a. His narrative is full of realistic details, which portray the living humanity of Jesus.

(1) He makes us *see* Jesus through the eyes of one who was present :—

His look—How He *looked round* with slow, searching gaze on the people in the synagogue, where there was a man which had his hand withered (iii. 5, 34); how He *turned Him about* and *looked round about* till His eye lighted on the woman cured of the issue of blood (v. 30-32); how He *looked up* to heaven while He blessed and brake the five loaves and two small fishes (vi. 41), and before He cured the deaf and dumb man in the Decapolis (vii. 34); how He *looked* wistfully on the rich young ruler (x. 21), and on the disciples (x. 23); how with solemn searching gaze *He looked round about upon all things* in the scene of the buying and selling in the temple courts (xi. 11).

His gestures—How He took the deaf and dumb man in the Decapolis *aside from the multitude privately, put His fingers into his ears, spat, and touched his tongue* (vii. 33); how *He sat down*, and *called the Twelve to Him* (ix. 35); how He took a child *into His arms* (ix. 36); how He took the children brought to be blessed *in His arms*, and *laid His hands upon them* (x. 16); how *He turned about* to rebuke Peter (viii. 33); how, when they were in the way going up to Jerusalem, *He went on before His disciples* (x. 32).

(2) He makes us *hear* Jesus with the ears of a bystander :—

Mark frequently uses *direct* instead of *indirect* speech : "He said

unto the sea, *Peace, be still*" (iv. 39); "He said, *Come forth, thou unclean spirit, out of the man*" (v. 8); "the devils besought Him, saying, *Send us into the swine*" (v. 12); "He saith unto them, *Come ye yourselves apart*" (vi. 31); "He rebuked the foul spirit, saying unto him, *Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I command thee come out of him*" (ix. 25).

He reports the *very Aramaic words* which our Lord uttered:—

*Talitha cumi* (v. 41); *Corban* (vii. 11); *Ephphatha* (vii. 34); *Abba* (xiv. 36).

(3) Mark delights to call attention to the human sympathy of Jesus:—

How He could *be angry* and could *grieve* at the hardening of heart among His hearers (iii. 5); at Peter (viii. 33); at the disciples (x. 14).

How He could *love* and *feel pity*, and *wonder*: He *loved* the young ruler (x. 21); He had *compassion* on the multitudes (vi. 34); He *marvelled* at the people's unbelief (vi. 6).

How He *expressed* His sorrow in *sighs*: "And looking up to heaven, *He sighed*" (vii. 34); "And *He sighed deeply in His spirit*, and said, Why doth this generation seek a sign?" (viii. 12).

How He suffered *hunger*, and needed *sleep* and *rest*: "And He Himself was in the stern *asleep* on the cushion" (iv. 38); "Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, *and rest awhile*. For there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat" (vi. 31); "When they were come out from Bethany *He hungered*" (xi. 12).

(4) Mark mentions circumstances which bring out the humanity of Jesus, and might seem to be limitations of His powers:—

How at Nazareth *He could do no mighty work*, save that He laid His hands upon a few sick folk (vi. 5); how He performed some cures *gradually*, as on the deaf and dumb man in the Decapolis (vii. 32-35), and on the blind man in Eastern Bethsaida (viii. 22-26); how Jesus desired solitude while His work grew in publicity and the people crowded round Him (i. 28, 35-37, 45, ii. 1-4, 15, iii. 10-12, vi. 32-33); how the unclean spirits first resisted and then submitted (i. 26, 27, 34, iii. 7-12, ix. 14-27).

*b.* Mark's narrative describes each incident with all the circumstances that made them impressive to the bystanders.

(1) He is at pains to describe the effects of Jesus' words and deeds on the minds of the crowds that thronged Him, and on that of the disciples that followed Him :—

How the disciples *were awed* by His power over the wind and sea : “And they *feared exceedingly*, and said one to another, Who is this,” etc. (iv. 41) ; “And the wind ceased, and they were *sore amazed* in themselves” (vi. 51) : how they were *amazed and astonished exceedingly* at His words about riches (x. 24, 26) ; how they were *amazed* when He walked before them going to His doom in Jerusalem (x. 32).

How the crowds that gathered to hear Him *were astonished* at His teaching (i. 22, vi. 2), at His power over unclean spirits (i. 27), at His power to heal the paralytic (“they were all amazed, and glorified God,” ii. 12).

(2) He records the thronging and pressing of the crowds, and the way in which they expressed their belief in His miraculous powers of healing :—

How, when it was noised that He had returned to Capernaum, so many gathered together to Him that there was no longer room for them, no, not even about the door (ii. 2).

How as many as had plagues *pressed upon Him* that they might touch Him (iii. 10) ; how the multitude came together, so that they could not so much as eat bread (iii. 20) ; how, when He was going to heal the daughter of Jairus, the multitude *thronged Him* (v. 31) ; how He was so pressed by the crowd on the shore of the Sea of Galilee that He had to enter into a boat (iv. 1) ; how there were so many coming and going that He had no leisure so much as to eat (vi. 31) ; how the people thronged about Him for days (viii. 2) ; how the sick folk came, and how the people brought their friends who were ill with diseases : “They brought unto Him *all that were sick*, and them *that were possessed with devils*” (i. 32) ; “And wheresoever He entered, into villages, or into cities, or into the country, *they laid the sick* in the market-places, and besought Him that they might touch if it were but the border of His garment” (vi. 56).

(3) In his desire to be vivid and graphic, Mark continually uses double words and phrases:—

“The Spirit driveth Him forth into the *wilderness*. And He was *in the wilderness*” (i. 13); “He went out, and began to *publish it much*, and to *spread abroad the matter*” (i. 45); “When He had looked around *with anger, being grieved* at the hardening of their heart” (iii. 5); “Who had his dwelling *in the tombs* . . . and always, day and night *in the tombs*” (v. 3-5), etc.

(4) His descriptions of incidents are full of minute details, as:—

“In the wilderness . . . *with the wild beasts*” (i. 13); “in the morning, *a great while before day*” (i. 35); there being no room, “*no, not even about the door*” (ii. 2); taking off the roof, and *digging a hole in it* (ii. 4); “began to make their way, *plucking the ears of corn*” (ii. 23); “taking Him, *even as He was*, into the ship” (iv. 36); “lying in the stern, *on the cushion*” (iv. 38); the Gadarene demoniac had *rent asunder* his chains, and had broken his fetters *in pieces* (v. 4); the multitude sat down, to be fed, on the *green grass*, and *in ranks by hundreds and by fifties* (vi. 39, 40); Christ’s garments at His transfiguration became *glistering, exceeding white, so as no fuller on earth can whiten them* (ix. 3); the young man who followed with Christ to Gethsemane *had a linen cloth cast about him over his naked body* (xiv. 51); Jesus took hold of the blind man *by the hand*, and brought him *out of the village*, and when He had spit *on his eyes*, and *laid His hands* upon him, etc. (viii. 23-25).

c. Mark continually uses diminutives:—

Jairus said, *My little daughter* (v. 23); damsel, a *little maid* (v. 41); *little dogs* or whelps (vii. 27); *small fishes* (viii. 7); *a little ear* (xiv. 47).

d. Mark records names and particulars of number, time, and place, which are not given in the other Gospels.

(1) He records *names*, and describes *persons* with minuteness:—

“They entered into the house of *Simon and Andrew, with James and John*” (i. 29); “*Simon and they that were with Him* followed after Him” (i. 36); Levi *the son of Alphaeus* sat at receipt of custom, and was called to be a disciple (ii. 14); “The Pharisees took counsel *with the Herodians*” (iii. 6); “The scribes *which came down from*

*Jerusalem*" (iii. 22); "As He went out from Jericho, with His disciples and a great multitude, *the son of Timæus, Bartimæus*, a blind beggar, was sitting by the wayside" (x. 46); "He went out unto Bethany *with the Twelve*" (xi. 11); "*Peter and James and John and Andrew* asked Him privately" (xiii. 3); "*The officers* received Him *with blows of their hands*" (xiv. 65); "Simon of Cyrene . . . *the father of Alexander and Rufus*" (xv. 21); *Salome* the mother of James and John (xv. 40).

(2) He gives *numbers* omitted by other evangelists :—

"They (the herd of swine) were *about two thousand*" (v. 13); Jesus sent His disciples forth *two and two* (vi. 7); the multitude to be fed sat down in ranks *by hundreds and by fifties* (vi. 40); Peter was warned, Before the cock crow *twice*, thou shalt deny me *thrice* (xiv. 30).

(3) He gives details of *time* not elsewhere recorded :—

Jesus departed to a desert place, after curing multitudes in Capernaum, in the morning, *a great while before day* (i. 35); Jesus spent *some days* on His first preaching tour in Galilee (ii. 1); "On the same day, *when even was come*," Jesus went over in a boat to the other side of the lake to encounter the storm (iv. 35); *when the Sabbath was come*, Jesus taught in Nazareth (vi. 2); it was *even-tide* when Jesus returned to Bethany from the temple (xi. 11), and *every evening* on this Passion week He left the city and retired to Bethany (xi. 19); Jesus was crucified at *the third hour* (xv. 25); Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome, went to the tomb *very early on the first day of the week* (xvi. 2).

(4) He gives particulars of *place* that no one else gives :—

After curing the sick of the palsy Jesus went forth *again by the sea-side* (ii. 13); when the Herodians and Pharisees conspired to crush Him, Jesus *withdrew to the sea* (iii. 7); people came from *Idumea* to hear Jesus (iii. 8); He began to teach *by the seaside*, before He delivered the parable of the Sower (iv. 1); the man out of whom went legion, preached *in the Decapolis* (v. 20); and when Jesus returned out of Tyre and Sidon by the Libanos, again *to the Decapolis* (vii. 31, etc.), crowds followed Him; Jesus sat in the temple court

*over against the treasury* (xii. 41); He sat on the Mount of Olives *over against the temple* (xiii. 3); Peter, challenged by the maid, withdrew *to the porch* (xiv. 68); the centurion who superintended the crucifixion *stood over against* Christ on the cross (xv. 39); when the women came to the empty tomb and entered, they saw a young man *sitting on the right side* (xvi. 5).<sup>1</sup>

To sum up this third set of characteristics, "the evangelist makes the histories more effective by the contrast between the hurried progress marked by the 'straightway,' which occurs over and over again, and the contemplative stillness in which he paints the scenery with a thousand touches,—the house, the sea, the followers, the growing throng, the persons by name, the numbers of men, of beasts, of coins, the green grass, the pillow on the stern of the boat on Gennesaret,—all described with the ready use of softening diminutives and with words of time that denote the present" (Keim, i. 129).

4. Mark's is the *Chronological Gospel*. The evangelists do not profess to write biographies in the modern sense of the term. Their intention was to give a vivid representation of the purpose of salvation as seen in the words, deeds, and sufferings of Jesus. They did not profess to write His life; they selected, John tells us, those *signs* which would best make men believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and would therefore lead them to accept Him as their Saviour (p. 13). The oral gospel of the apostle became a cycle of representative sayings and incidents, and seems to have at first dwelt on the Resurrection and Passion, and grown backwards chronologically. When it became stereotyped by use, however, the collection of incidents naturally took a certain chronological order, and Mark's Gospel, which most nearly reproduces that oral gospel of the earliest Christian Church, reproduces also its chronological order, without any attempt to modify it, by grouping together similar sayings and deeds, as Matthew continually does, or by arranging the incidents and sermons in artistic *order*, as Luke does throughout. Hence Mark is the only evangelist whose order may be almost exactly retained in an attempt to state with precision the course in

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Maclear's *St. Mark*, pp. 18, 19.



time of the events in the life of our Lord. He omits large portions of the public ministry of Christ ; but if the student learns to supply these in their proper place from the other evangelists, the Gospel of Mark will give him a continuous life of Christ.

#### WHEN AND WHERE WRITTEN, AND FOR WHOM?

None of these questions can be answered with exactness.

1. The time of writing. It has already been shown that Mark's Gospel is most probably the earliest (p. 26) ; it was written before the Gospels of Matthew, Luke, and John. It will be needless then to allude to any theories about date, which depend on the assumption that this Gospel comes after the Gospels of Matthew or Luke ; and this cuts adrift a host of speculations about the time of writing. A tradition, coming down to us through Irenæus, says that Mark wrote his Gospel *after the deaths of Peter and Paul*, which means to most critics that the Gospel could not have been written before 68 A.D. ; on the other hand, Clement of Alexandria maintained that the Gospel was written during Peter's lifetime, but this is a statement few receive. Most critics conjecture, from the predictions of the fall of Jerusalem in chap. xiii., that the Gospel must have been written before the destruction of that city by the Romans under Titus. The most probable date of writing is therefore some time between 68 and 70 A.D.

2. The place where it was written. Early tradition, recorded by Irenæus, Clement of Alexandria, and Jerome, declares that the Gospel was written at *Rome*. Most modern critics have adopted this view. Chrysostom, however, declared that the Gospel was written by Mark at *Alexandria*, at the request of his disciples there. A modern scholar, Storr, has whimsically decided that *Antioch* must have been the place where Mark wrote his Gospel.

3. For whom was the Gospel written? Most probably for Gentile Christians, and especially for those of Rome. This is what tradition says, and it is confirmed by many peculiarities of style and statement in the Gospel itself.

A. That the evangelist wrote for Gentiles is proved in the following way :—

(1) He does not trace the connection between Jesus and the Old Testament by quotations from the prophets. He proves by quotation that John the Baptist was the predicted messenger (i. 2); but this is almost his only reference to Old Testament prophecy.

(2) He does not so much as use the terms “law” and “lawgiver,” and he explains carefully such Jewish usages, etc., as Gentiles could not be expected to understand. Thus he explains what *Corban* is (vii. 11), and says that *the Jews eat not unless they wash their hands diligently* (vii. 3); that the *Passover was killed on the first day of unleavened bread* (xiv. 12); that the *preparation was the day before the Sabbath* (xv. 42); that the *Jordan is a river* (i. 5).

(3) He translates words which Gentiles would not be able to understand :—

*Boanerges* (iii. 17); *Talitha cumi* (v. 41); *Bartimæus* (x. 46); *Abba* (xiv. 36); *Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani* (xv. 34); *Gehenna* (ix. 43).

B. That the evangelist wrote for Roman readers has been proved from the following facts :—

(1) He alone mentions that Simon the Cyrenian was the father of Alexander and Rufus. Was this because Rufus (Rom. xvi. 13) was well known in Rome?

(2) He uses several Latin words which are found in no other Gospel, and makes use of most of the Latinisms which Matthew and John have. Mark's Latin words which do not occur in any other Gospel are :—

*Speculator*, or soldier of the guard (vi. 27); *xestes*, for sextarius, pot (vii. 8); *quadrans*, a farthing (xii. 42); *ἱκανὸν ποιῆσαι* = *satisfacere*, to content (xv. 15); *centurion* (xv. 39, 44, 45).

The Latin words which he shares with other evangelists are :—

*Grabatus*, bed (ii. 4, 9, 11, 12; see John v. 8, 9, 10); the word translated *scourged* (xv. 15; see Matt. xxvii. 26) is derived from the Latin *flagellum*; *Prætorium* (xv. 16; see Matt. xxvii. 27; John xviii. 28); *census* (xii. 14; Matt. xvii. 25).

(3) Many of his Greek words and phrases are expressly forbidden

by the grammarians, but would naturally "find place in the mongrel Greek of the slaves and freedmen who formed the first congregations of the Church at Rome."

### ANALYSIS OF THE GOSPEL.

This has been made on these principles :—

(1) To give in brief outline the main incidents in the life of Christ as that is portrayed in the Gospels. To this end the omissions of Mark are noted, and references are given to the complementary passages in the other evangelists.

(2) To show at a glance those rapid journeys of Christ which are the most characteristic feature of the Gospel of Mark.

#### Part I.—The Preparation and Year of Quiet Work in Judea and Galilee, i. 1-13.

- |   |           |         |
|---|-----------|---------|
| i. JOHN THE BAPTIST, THE FORERUNNER,            | . . . . . | i. 1-8. |
| ii. OUR LORD'S JOURNEY TO JUDEA TO BE BAPTIZED, | . . . . . | 9-11.   |
| iii. THE TEMPTATION,                            | . . . . . | 12, 13. |

Mark omits between i. 13 and i. 14 a period of fourteen months :—

- (1.) *The return of Jesus to Galilee by Bethabara, and the first call of Andrew, Simon, and Philip* (John i. 29-51).
- (2.) *From Nazareth to Cana—Water turned to wine* (John ii. 1-11).
- (3.) *From Cana to Capernaum* (John ii. 12).
- (4.) *From Nazareth to Jerusalem, and stay in Jerusalem—First Passover journey* (John ii. 13-iii. 21).
- (5.) *From Jerusalem to Ænon in Judea—Troubles there with John's disciples—Back to Nazareth through Samaria* (John iii. 22-iv. 43).
- (6.) *From Nazareth to Cana—Nobleman's son* (John iv. 43-54).
- (7.) *From Nazareth to Jerusalem, and stay there till He hears of the imprisonment of John the Baptist—Second Passover journey* (John v. 1-47).

#### Part II.—The Year of Popularity—Christ's Ministry in Galilee, i. 14-vi. 30.

*From the imprisonment of John the Baptist until Jesus hears of his death—Our Lord made preaching journeys through Galilee from Capernaum.*

##### i. FIRST SOJOURN IN CAPERNAUM, i. 14-34.

1. Preaching the kingdom—Four disciples called, . . . . . 14-20.
2. A Sabbath-day's work at Capernaum :
  - (1.) The demoniac cured, . . . . . 21-28.
  - (2.) The cure of Peter's wife's mother, and many others, 29-34.

## ii. FIRST PREACHING JOURNEY THROUGH GALILEE, i. 35-45.

1. Retirement to a desert place, . . . . . 35-39.
2. Cleansing of a leper, . . . . . 40-45.

## iii. SECOND SOJOURN IN CAPERNAUM, ii. 1-iii. 12.

[*Beginning of conflict with the Scribes.*]

1. The paralytic cured, . . . . . ii. 1-12.
2. The call of a publican to be a disciple, . . . . . 13-17.
3. Discourse on fasting, . . . . . 18-22.
4. The disciples pluck ears of corn on the Sabbath day, . . . . . 23-28.
5. The man with the withered hand, . . . . . iii. 1-6.
6. Open-air preaching, . . . . . 7-12.

## iv. SECOND PREACHING JOURNEY, iii. 13-19.

The call of the twelve apostles, 13-19.

Mark omits between the first and second clause of iii. 19 :—

- (1.) *Our Lord's return to Capernaum, and third sojourn there, during which He heals the centurion's servant* (Matt. viii. 5-13 ; Luke vii. 1-10).
- (2.) *His third preaching journey to Nain, where He raises the widow's son* (Luke vii. 11-17)—*Whilst there a message from John the Baptist* (Luke vii. 18-35)—*Jesus dines with Simon the Pharisee—Is anointed by a woman—Continues His circuit in Galilee with the Twelve* (Luke vii. 36-viii. 3).

## v. FOURTH SOJOURN IN CAPERNAUM, iii. 19-35.

1. Opposition of His relatives. Said to be mad, . . . . . 20, 21.
2. Can Satan cast out Satan? . . . . . 22-30.
2. The true kinsfolk, . . . . . 31-35.

## vi. FOURTH PREACHING JOURNEY IN GALILEE, iv. 1-v. 20.

1. Parables of the kingdom, . . . . . iv. 1-34.
  - (1.) The sower, . . . . . 3-25.
  - (2.) The Seed, . . . . . 26-29.
  - (3.) The mustard seed, . . . . . 30-34.
2. Stilling the storm, . . . . . 35-41.
3. The Gergesene demoniac, . . . . . v. 1-20.

## vii. FIFTH SOJOURN IN CAPERNAUM, v. 21-43.

1. The daughter of Jairus, . . . . . 21-24 and 35-43.
2. The sick woman, . . . . . 25-34.

## viii. FIFTH PREACHING JOURNEY IN GALILEE, vi. 1-29.

1. The second rejection at Nazareth, . . . . . 1-6.
2. The mission of the Twelve, . . . . . 7-13.
3. The murder of John the Baptist, . . . . . 14-29.

## ix. SIXTH SOJOURN IN CAPERNAUM, vi. 30.

The return of the Twelve, 30.

**Part III.—The Year of Opposition, vi. 30-x. 52.****A.—Period of Seclusion in Galilee—Journeys of Flight.***From the Passover to the Feast of Tabernacles—Six months.*

- i. **FIRST JOURNEY OF FLIGHT; ACROSS THE SEA OF GALILEE**, vi. 30-56.
  1. Retirement to a desert place—Feeding the five thousand, vi. 30-44.
  2. Walking on the sea, . . . . . 45-56.
- ii. **SEVENTH SOJOURN IN CAPERNAUM**, vii. 1-23.
 

The traditions about eating, 1-23.
- iii. **SECOND JOURNEY OF FLIGHT**, vii. 24-viii. 10.
  1. Retirement to the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, . . . . . vii. 24.
  2. The Syrophœnician woman, . . . . . 25-30.
  3. Miracles in the Decapolis, . . . . . vii. 31-viii. 9.
    - (1.) The deaf and dumb man, . . . . . vii. 31-37.
    - (2.) Feeding the four thousand, . . . . . viii. 1-9.
  4. Across the sea to Dalmanutha, . . . . . 10.
- iv. **EIGHTH STAY AT CAPERNAUM (?)**, viii. 11, 12.
 

The Pharisees ask a sign, 11, 12.
- v. **THIRD JOURNEY OF FLIGHT**, viii. 13-ix. 32.
  1. Across the sea to Bethsaida-Julias, . . . . . viii. 13.
  2. The leaven of the Pharisees, . . . . . 14-21.
  3. **The blind man of Bethsaida-Julias**, . . . . . 22-26.
  4. At Cæsarea-Philippi, . . . . . 27.
  5. Peter's confession, . . . . . 27-30.
  6. *First clear prediction of the Passion*, . . . . . viii. 31-ix. 1.
  7. Retirement to the mountain-range of Hermon—The Transfiguration, . . . . . 2-13.
  8. The demoniac boy, . . . . . 14-29.
  9. Return through Galilee—*The second prediction of the Passion*, . . . . . 30-32.
- vi. **NINTH SOJOURN IN CAPERNAUM**, ix. 33-50.
  1. The disciples taught humility, . . . . . 33-37.
  2. The disciples taught tolerance, . . . . . 38-50.

**B.—Period of Work in Perea and Judea.***From Feast of Tabernacles to the beginning of the Passion week—Six months.*

Mark omits between ix. 50 and x. 1, an interval of not less than three months:—

- (1.) *Jesus' journey to Jerusalem to Feast of Tabernacles—He goes secretly—The people ask, Where is He?—Jesus appears in the temple and teaches—The Jews wish to arrest Him—Nicodemus' plea—The adulteress brought to Him—Attempt to stone Him—Heals man blind from birth—Parable of good shepherd* (John vii. 2-x. 21).

(2.) *Returns to Galilee.*

(3.) *Jesus' last journey to Jerusalem—Attempts to go by Samaria—Repulse at Samaritan village—Retires to another village probably within Galilean frontier—Sends out the seventy to prepare His way* (Luke ix. 51-x. 24).

i. JESUS IN THE PEREA—FIRST PREACHING JOURNEY THERE, x. 1-31.

- |   |        |
|---|--------|
| 1. Marriage and divorce, . . . . .                        | 2-12.  |
| 2. Blessing little children, . . . . .                    | 13-16. |
| 3. The rich young ruler, . . . . .                        | 17-22. |
| 4. The temptations of the rich, . . . . .                 | 23-27. |
| 5. Self-sacrificing disciples and their reward, . . . . . | 28-31. |

Mark omits between x. 31 and x. 32 :—

(1.) *A large portion of our Lord's work in the Perea* (Luke xi. 1-xiii. 35).

(2.) *Jesus goes from the Perea to Jerusalem to the Feast of Dedication* (John x. 22).

(3.) *The visit to Martha and Mary at Bethany* (Luke x. 38-42).

(4.) *His presence in Jerusalem, and the second attempt to stone Him* (John x. 23-38).

(5.) *His flight to the Perea* (John x. 39-42).—*To Bethany beyond Jordan, where He dines with Pharisee on Sabbath—Heals man with dropsy—Parable of the supper—Parables of lost sheep, piece of silver, prodigal son, wasteful steward, rich man and Lazarus* (Luke xiv. 1-xvii. 10).

(6.) *The message that Lazarus is ill* (John xi. 1-6.)

(7.) *The visit to Bethany, and the raising of Lazarus* (John xi. 7-46).

(8.) *The Jewish council summoned, and resolves to put Jesus to death* (John xi. 47-53).

(9.) *His flight to Ephraim, and His stay there till the approach of the Passover* (John xi. 54, 55).

ii. JOURNEY FROM EPHRAIM TO BETHANY, x. 31-52.

- |   |        |
|---|--------|
| 1. <i>Third prediction of the Passion</i> , . . . . .   | 32-34. |
| 2. Place in the kingdom—Mistaken expectations, . . . . .  | 35-45. |
| 3. At Jericho—Blind Bartimæus healed, . . . . .   | 46-52. |
| [4. The anointing at Bethany, xiv. 1-11, belongs to this section, and is related out of its order.] |        |

Part IV.—The Events of the Passion Week, xi. 1.-xvi. 1.

i. THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK.

- |   |           |
|---|-----------|
| 1. Triumphant entry into Jerusalem, . . . . . | xi. 1-10. |
| 2. Back to Bethany, . . . . .                 | 11.       |

ii. MONDAY.

- |   |        |
|---|--------|
| 1. The fruitless fig-tree withered, . . . . .   | 12-14. |
| 2. The temple cleansed a second time, . . . . . | 15-18. |
| 3. Back to Bethany, . . . . .                   | 19.    |

## iii. TUESDAY.

1. The lesson of the withered fig-tree, . . . . . 20-26.
2. The attack of the Sanhedrin—Their question about His authority—Jesus' question about John the Baptist, . . . . . xi. 27-33.
3. The parable of the wicked husbandmen, . . . . . xii. 1-12.
4. Catching questions :— . . . . . 13-34.
  - (1) The Pharisees ask about tribute money, . . . . . 13-17.
  - (2) The Sadducees ask about the resurrection, . . . . . 18-27.
  - (3) The lawyer asks which is the first commandment, . . . . . 28-34.
5. Our Lord's counter-question, . . . . . 35-37.
6. Beware of the scribes, . . . . . 38-40.
7. The widow's mite, . . . . . 41-44.
8. Prediction of destruction of Jerusalem and end of the world, . . . . . xiii. 1-37.

## iv. WEDNESDAY.

Jesus in quiet at Bethany—Judas the traitor in Jerusalem, . . . . . xiv. 1, 2, 10, 11.

## v. THURSDAY.

1. Preparation for the Passover, . . . . . xiv. 12-16.
2. Institution of the Lord's Supper, . . . . . 17-25.
3. At the Mount of Olives—Peter's protestations, . . . . . 26-31.
4. Gethsemane, . . . . . 32-42.
5. Jesus taken prisoner, . . . . . 43-52.

## vi. FRIDAY.

1. The Jewish trial, . . . . . xiv. 53-65.
2. Peter's denials of Jesus, . . . . . 66-72.
3. The Roman trial, . . . . . xv. 1-14.
4. The scourging, mocking, and crucifixion of Jesus, . . . . . 15-36.
5. The death, . . . . . 37-41.
6. The burial, . . . . . 42-47.

## vii. JEWISH SABBATH.

The rest of Christ in the tomb, . . . . . xvi. 1.

**Part V.—The Resurrection and Ascension, xvi. 1-20.**

1. The visit of the Maries and of Salome, . . . . . xvi. 1-3.
2. The Resurrection, . . . . . 4-8.
3. Appearances after the Resurrection :—
  - (1) To Mary Magdalene, . . . . . 9-11.
  - (2) To the two disciples, . . . . . 12, 13.
  - (3) To the eleven, . . . . . 14.
4. The last charge and the Ascension, . . . . . 15-19.
5. Sitting at the right hand of God, . . . . . 19, 20.

THE LAND OF PALESTINE DURING OUR LORD'S MINISTRY  
ON EARTH.

When our Lord was born, a king reigned in Jerusalem whose kingdom was almost as extensive as the old kingdom of David, and included territory which no Jewish sovereign since the days of Solomon had possessed. During our Lord's ministry, the kingdom had perished with the king. Judea and Samaria were Roman provinces, and the rest of the territory was divided into three separate principalities.

The kingdom of Herod the Great included what afterwards became the Province of Judea and Samaria and three Tetrarchies. It included Galilee, Samaria, and Judea on the west side of Jordan; Gaulonitis, including Panea, Trachonitis, Batanea and Ulatha, the Decapolis and Perea, on the east side of Jordan. The land was divided physically into Western and Eastern Palestine by the Jordan valley, a long, deep trench, one of the most singular in the world, which begins at the foot of Mount Hermon, and ends at the foot of Mount Hor, some miles north of the upper end of the Gulf of Akaba on the Red Sea. This valley is at sea-level at Lake Huleh (Waters of Merom); the surface of the Sea of Galilee is 682 feet, and the surface of the Dead Sea 1292 feet below the sea-level. Hence the Jordan is one succession of fierce cataracts, and is useless either for navigation or irrigation. The Jordan valley concentrates the glare of the Eastern sun, and is inaccessible to the sea breezes which would temper the heat. It has a climate and a vegetation which are almost tropical.

Western Palestine was divided into Galilee, Samaria, and Judea. Galilee, extending from the slopes of Lebanon on the north, and including the plain of Esdraelon on the south, was the most fertile part of Palestine, thronged with towns and villages full of people. Josephus tells us that the ground was so fertile that it was cultivated with the spade like a garden. The Talmud says that there was little meadow land, all was in crop. Vines and olives were abundant; "men waded in oil." The Gospels represent the land full



of bustling life. Men labour in vineyards, plough in the fields, dig in gardens. "Before the mill the millstones lie ready; the barns are full, new ones are built. In the highways and hedges the blind and the halt await the alms of the passers-by. Day-labourers are hired in the market, and paid in the evening. Servants plough and feed cattle in the fields, and at sundown come home to wait upon their masters. Holiday-makers sing and dance. Children play and quarrel in the market-places. And when the evening comes the doors are shut, and the feasting and revelry begin; while the drunken steward scolds and beats men-servants and maids. From morning to night life is full of bustle, gay and boisterous, and the busy people find little time to meditate upon the things of the kingdom. The one has bought a field, and must go and see it; the other has bought oxen, and must try them; the third has other business—a feast, a funeral, or a wedding."<sup>1</sup> It is thus that our Lord, in His parables and sermons, paints the life of the people of Galilee. Galilee was the Lancashire or the Lanarkshire of Palestine; and the western shore of the lake, which was called *the eye of Galilee*, was the most teeming district of this populous province. The Lake of Tiberias abounded in fish, which, pickled in barrels, went far and wide. The Gospels are full of allusions to this busy fish traffic. They tell us of the vessels sailing up and down; of the fishermen in their boats setting their nets with the help of assistants, or drying and mending them on the shores of the lake. Phœnicians, Syrians, Arabs, and Greeks mingled with the Jews; for the country was fertile, and attracted strangers; and it lay on a great high-road—from Damascus to Ptolemais—and foreigners found it out. It was a place of commerce, and the people had great intercourse with strangers. But with all this they were Jews, who heard the Scriptures in their synagogues, expected the redemption of Israel, and kept the commandments of Moses in the old, simple fashion. The Galileans were a bold, warlike people, ever ready for tumults, with the same freebooting spirit in them which had lived in their fathers, whom Herod had crushed. They were laughed at by the Jews, maid-ser-

<sup>1</sup> Hausrath's *New Testament Times*, i. 10.

vants mocked their dialect, rabbis asked contemptuously if any good could come out of Nazareth ; but they held their own in bold, simple, peasant fashion.

Just south of Galilee was Samaria, lying like a wedge between it and Judea, full of hills, covered with noble forests, with valleys of rich black alluvial soil between. "Joseph is a fruitful bough, a fruitful bough by a well." The Samaritans were a mixed race, separated from the Galileans in the north, and the pure Jews in the south, not merely by situation, but by different customs and by centuries of hate. They had not been allowed to help in the building of the temple ; and wrathful at the refusal, they had become more and more separated from their co-religionist neighbours. They rejected all the Scriptures which had been gathered during the captivity, and kept only the Pentateuch. They were a small people ; their land was not very strong for defence, and they submitted willingly to any conquest but a Jewish one. And the Jews learned to hate them worse than they did Gentiles. The Maccabees pulled down their strongholds, and subjected them to humiliations. And so, in turn, the Samaritans welcomed the Romans, welcomed Herod, —welcomed any foreign conqueror who came to crush the Jews ; and thus in the centre of Palestine they stood, an anti-Jewish citadel. They waylaid single Jews going up to Jerusalem ; they forbade shelter or food to Jewish travellers ; they insulted Jewish religious festivals. And as for the Jews, we learn their feelings in the phrase, "Thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil."

South of Samaria, and less fertile by far, lay Judea, the home of David and Saul, the scene of the wars with the Philistines, the battle-ground of the Maccabees. The soil was much poorer than that of Samaria, and poorer still than that of Galilee,—hard limestone rock underneath, with oftentimes scarcity of water. Hence the population was scantier ; the country people were poorer, many of them shepherds ; and the land was too full of people for comfort. Jerusalem the capital, especially, was thronged with a restless crowd of people, who could not have found means of livelihood apart from the throng of strangers from abroad and from Galilee, which the

temple festivals attracted. The centre of Judea was Jerusalem: and the heart of Jerusalem was the temple and the law. It was the temple that the inhabitants lived by. They sold doves, traded cattle to the worshippers, and changed, at a high discount, the money of foreign Jews who thronged to pay the temple tax. *The temple with its services was not merely their religion; it was also their livelihood.* Vast numbers of priests thronged Jerusalem—20,000, says Josephus. It was the seat of the Sanhedrin, and the rabbis collected in Jerusalem. Four hundred and eighty synagogues were crowded together in the city. Jerusalem was the city of the priests and of the scribes;—the centre of Jewish exclusiveness, the hotbed of Jewish fanaticism. And it stamped its impress on Judea. The poorer the life in the barren highlands of Judea, the more the people cherished the sanctuary. They were shut out from all the world. To the south-east lay the desert, swept by Bedouin marauders. Northwards was hostile Samaria; and the coast, which might have given them outlet, was in possession of Greek cities.

The lands beyond Jordan were but half-Jewish. The Perea, nearest to Judea, had most Jews, mingled with Syrians and Arabians. The Decapolis, originally a confederation of cities to protect trade from the Bedouins—the Hanse League of Palestine—was much more Gentile than Jewish. Gaulonitis, Batanea, Trachonitis, Ulatha, and Panea contained a large number of Jews; while Iturea, the eastmost of all, was peopled by a half-savage Syrian tribe.

Mark's Gospel tells us that Jesus preached in all the chief provinces in Palestine, and that He went on one occasion at least beyond its boundaries. The first year of His ministry was almost equally divided between Judea and Galilee; the second year was spent almost exclusively in Galilee with Capernaum as a centre; during the third year of His ministry, our Lord made several rapid journeys of flight into the territories of Philip, away to Phœnicia on the north-west border of Galilee, and when His time approached He spent a long while in the Perea before going up to Jerusalem for the last time, and returned to that district after the attempt to

stone Him at the Feast of Dedication.<sup>1</sup> It is probable that in His six journeys to Jerusalem our Lord usually crossed from Galilee to the Perea by the Bethshean ford, about 12 miles south of the Sea of Galilee, and travelled down the eastern bank of the Jordan to the Jericho ford; if so, He must have been frequently in the Perea.

The district of John the Baptist's ministry, although by no means so extensive, was yet wider than many have supposed. At least three different stations are mentioned where John baptized. The first, where Jesus was baptized, was near the Jericho ford, on the eastern side of the Jordan; the second, where John bore witness to Jesus, was near the Bethshean ford, about 12 miles south of the Sea of Galilee; the third, where Jesus' disciples disputed with John, was in Judea, about 5 miles north-east of Jerusalem, at Ænon.

#### MAP OF PALESTINE.

##### I. John's places of baptizing:—

1. At the Jordan ford near Jericho, where Jesus was baptized (Matt. iii. 13, see below).
2. At Bethabara, near the Bethshean ford, 12 miles south of Sea of Galilee, where John bore witness to Jesus as the "Lamb of God" (John i. 29-37).
3. At Ænon, 5 miles north-east of Jerusalem, in a secluded valley full of springs and pools, where Jesus' disciples and John's disputed about baptizing (John iii. 23).

##### II. The journeys of our Lord:<sup>2</sup>—

(Went up to Passover from Nazareth to Jerusalem, being twelve years old, Luke ii. 41-52.)

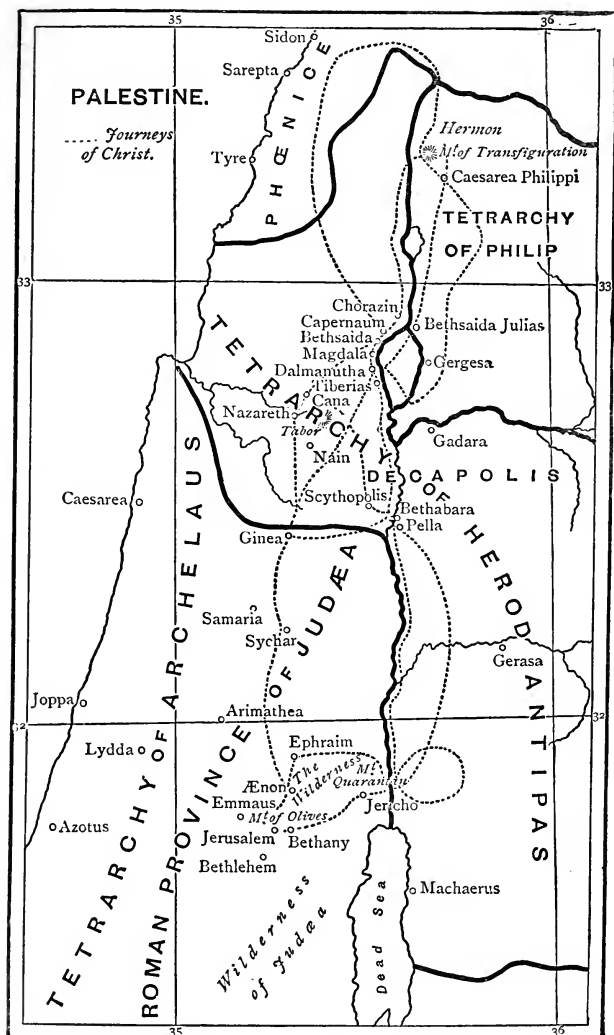
##### i. Year of quiet work in Judea and Galilee.

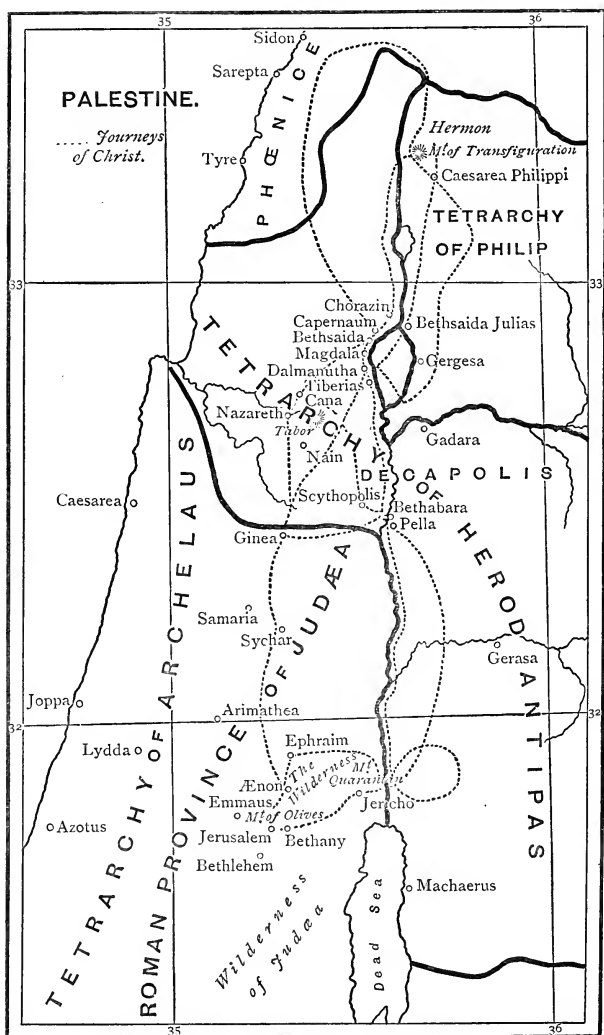
###### 1. JESUS GOES UP TO BE BAPTIZED.

- (1) From Nazareth to Jericho ford of Jordan (Matt. iii. 13; Mark i. 9; Luke iii. 21).
- (2) From Jordan to Wilderness of Temptation (Matt. iv. 1-11; Mark i. 12, 13; Luke iv. 1-13).
- (3) Thence to Bethabara on Jordan, 12 miles south of Sea of Galilee, John's second baptizing station (John i. 29-37).
- (4) From Bethabara, with Andrew, Simon, and Philip, back to Nazareth (John i. 38-51).

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 38, 49.

<sup>2</sup> The separate journeys of our Lord are not indicated on the map by special marks; the reader is expected to follow the dotted lines with the aid of this list.





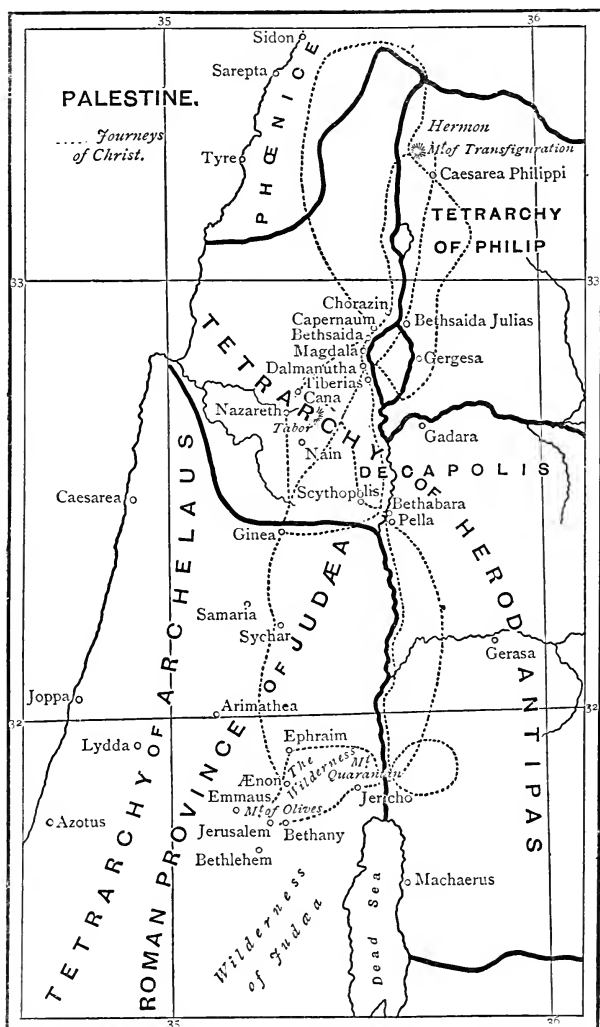
2. FROM NAZARETH TO CANA—water turned to wine (John ii. 1-11).
3. FROM CANA TO CAPERNAUM (John ii. 12).
4. FIRST PASSOVER JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM.
  - (1) From Capernaum or Nazareth through Galilee to Bethshean ford, thence by Jordan valley, east side, to Jericho ford and Jerusalem (John ii. 13-iii. 21).
  - (2) From Jerusalem to Ænon. Jesus' disciples baptize. Troubles with disciples of John. Goes back to Galilee through Samaria. Sychar and Samaritan woman. Thence to Nazareth (John iii. 22-iv. 45).
5. NAZARETH TO CANA—nobleman's son cured (John iv. 46-54).
6. SECOND PASSOVER JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM.
  - (1) From Nazareth by the same route as before to Jerusalem. There Jesus cures impotent man at Bethesda. The Pharisees seek His life. Hears of John's imprisonment (John v. 1-47).
  - (2) Back to Nazareth by the Jordan valley as He had come (Matt. iv. 12; Mark i. 14; Luke iv. 14).

ii. **Year of popularity.** Five preaching journeys in Galilee, see p. 73.

iii. **Year of opposition.**

#### 1. JOURNEYS OF FLIGHT IN GALILEE.

- (1) First journey of flight. Across Sea of Galilee.
  - (a) From Capernaum to Plain of Butaiha. Feeding of 5000.
  - (b) Back to Galilee. Storm. Jesus walking on water. Land at Gennesaret (Mark vi. 30-53; Matt. xiv. 13-34; Luke ix. 10-17; John vi. 1-21).
- (2) Second journey of flight—coasts of Tyre and Sidon.
  - (a) From Capernaum and Bethsaida through north-west Galilee to Phœnician border—Syrophœnician woman.
  - (b) Thence to Sidon, thence by Lebanon to upper springs of Jordan, down Jordan east bank to the Decapolis, on south-east shore of Sea of Galilee feeds 4000, back to Galilee to coast of Dalmanutha or Magadan (Mark vii. 24-viii. 10; Matt. xv. 21-39).
- (3) Third journey of flight—Cæsarea Philippi.
  - (a) Across the Sea of Galilee to Bethsaida Julias. Blind man healed.
  - (b) Thence by east side of Jordan northwards to the source near Cæsarea Philippi. Peter's confession and first clear prediction of Passion on the way.
  - (c) Thence to the mountain range of Hermon—the transfiguration—the demoniac boy.
  - (d) Back through Galilee, crossing Jordan below Lake Huleh and down the west bank. On the road second prediction of the Passion—to Capernaum (Mark viii. 13-ix. 33).





**2. JOURNEYS TO JERUSALEM.****(1) Journey to Feast of Tabernacles.**

Secretly by unfrequented and now unknown route—return to Galilee (John vii. 2-x. 21).

**(2) Last journey to Jerusalem.**

(a) From Capernaum to Samaritan village (Ginnea)—repulsed, so to an unknown village probably within the Galilean border—there stays to send out the seventy—thence to Perea by Bethabara and Bethshean ford (Luke ix. 51-x. 24).

(b) Through Perea slowly—preaching, discussing with Pharisees, working miracles (Mark x. 1-31; Luke xi. 1-xiii. 35).

(c) From Perea by Jericho ford, and by Jericho (parable of good Samaritan) to Bethany and Jerusalem—The Feast of Dedication (Luke x. 25-42; John x. 22-38).

**3. JOURNEYS OF FLIGHT FROM JERUSALEM.****(1) First flight from Jerusalem—to Perea.**

(a) Jews attempt to stone Jesus—He retires to Bethany beyond Jordan in the Perea—miracles and various parables (Luke xiv. 1-xvii. 10; John x. 39-42).

(b) Message sent that Lazarus is ill—after delay Jesus goes back to Bethany—raises Lazarus (John xi. 1-46).

**(2) Second flight from Jerusalem—to Ephraim.**

(a) Sanhedrin resolves to kill Jesus—He goes to Ephraim and stays till the Passover approaches (John xi. 47-55).

(b) From Ephraim across to Jordan valley—joins stream of pilgrims on west side of Jordan—through Jericho (blind Bartimæus) to Bethany, where our Lord resided during the Passion week (Mark x. 31-52 and xiv. 1-11; Matt. xx. 17-34; Luke xviii. 31-xix. 28).

## THE POLITICAL STATE OF PALESTINE DURING OUR LORD'S MINISTRY.

When our Lord was born, Herod the Great ruled over Palestine; by energy, subtlety, and murder he had built his empire on the ruins of the princely house of the Maccabees or Asmoneans. A glance at the map of Palestine shows traces of the long centuries of suffering and servitude which the Jews had passed through since the captivity. Ptolemais, Neapolis, Scythopolis, and Seleucia are Greek names; Tiberias, Cæsarea Philippi, Bethsaida Julias, are Roman.

They preserve the history of successive conquests. The Persian dominion, beginning during the captivity, lasted till 333 B.C. Then Alexander the Great added Syria and Palestine to his conquests, and at his death the Greek dynasty of Antioch strove with the Greek dynasty of Alexandria to absorb the Holy Land under their rule. When Jewish sufferings were at their height, a family of deliverers, the Asmoneans, sprung not from the priest-nobles but from the people, arose. One of them, the great Judas, smote the Greeks as the Frankish chieftain Charles smote the Moors, and grateful peoples bestowed on both leaders the same title—the Hammer: Charles Martel, the Hammer of the Moors; Judas Maccabeus, the Hammer of the heathen Greeks.

In the year 69 B.C. the Maccabean family, who for nearly a century had ruled as priest-kings in Jerusalem, were represented by two brothers—Aristobulus the younger, round whom gathered the old priestly aristocratic families now known as Sadducees; and John Hyrcanus, who was supported by the Pharisees, or leaders of the people. The presence of Pompey the Great in the East suggested an appeal to Rome. Pompey decided in favour of Hyrcanus; Aristobulus appealed to arms. After a short, fierce struggle, the Romans conquered the land, and their dominion as over-lords began. The succeeding forty years were crowded with great events. Pompey gave his judgment between the Maccabean brothers in the year when Cicero was consul, when Catiline conspired, when Augustus was born. Then followed the wars of factions, the struggle between Pompey and Cæsar, the triumph of Julius Cæsar, his assassination, the flight of the conspirators, their defeat at Philippi, the triumvirate of Antony, Lepidus and Augustus, and at length the triumph of Augustus, and the establishment of the empire. These troubled waters were watched by a family of unscrupulous fishers; these great events served to raise an obscure Arab family to the throne of Palestine.

Antipater, an Idumean, who had gained the confidence of Hyrcanus, also gained the support of Pompey, and became the real ruler of Palestine. His son was the Herod who reigned when our Lord was born, who saw the wise men, and who slew the infants

of Bethlehem. He was from earliest manhood a bold and skilful general, a splendid horseman, a master of craft, and cruel without remorse. From the first he set himself to win the throne of Palestine by submission to Rome. When Julius Cæsar was slain, he purchased the friendship of his murderers. When the conspirators were defeated at Philippi, he won over Antony to his side. When the young Octavius became Augustus, he conciliated the new ruler. In spite of all difficulties, and hoping to gild future usurpation by legal claims, he married Mariamne, the grand-daughter of John Hyrcanus, destined to be the last of the Maccabees, and, in the age which produced Cleopatra, perhaps the most beautiful woman of her time. Herod ruthlessly put down the patriotic freebooters of Galilee; he was slavishly subservient to Rome, and introduced Roman customs hateful to the Jews; and he degraded the high-priesthood by appointing to the office creatures of his own, who would make it subservient to his political ends. But he strove to reconcile the Jews to his rule by giving the land peace and some measure of material prosperity, by gaining permission for the free exercise of their religion, and by building them a gorgeous temple, more costly than Solomon's. To this end he ruled by Roman force, despised by the Romans who supported him, loathed by the people he governed, endeavouring to free himself from Jewish hatred by humane government, then madly plunging into some cruel massacre when his suspicious nature was roused.

At Herod's death the old disturbances broke out afresh. His sons<sup>1</sup> quarrelled for the kingdom, which was in a state of open insurrection. The revolt was put down in ruthless Roman fashion, but broke out again and again. At the Passover, a cohort was stoned by the excited people; the soldiers turned on the mob and slew 3000 of them within the gates of the temple. Meanwhile the sons of Herod went to Rome to plead their claims before Augustus. Augustus resolved to divide the kingdom. Archelaus, who reproduced the worst sides of his father's character, was invested with Judea and Samaria; Philip, who inherited his nobler qualities, got

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 58, 59.

Gaulonitis ; Herod Antipas, "that fox," a meaner edition of his father, received Galilee and the Perea. While these disputes were raging, our Lord, with Joseph and Mary, was safe in Egypt.

Archelaus proved a cruel and incapable ruler, and partial revolts and continual complaints to Rome marked his reign. Joseph and Mary were not alone among Jewish families in seeking refuge from the tyranny of Archelaus within the dominions of Herod Antipas. At last the patience of Augustus was wearied out ; and when our Lord was still a child, not eleven years old, a Roman procurator was appointed over Judea, and the Jews had no king but Cæsar. They had often before asked for this. They had told Pompey that their government was a theocracy, and brooked no king ; and at last Rome took them at their word, and set a Roman governor over them. At first they thought they had gained more freedom ; but they were soon undeceived. The first decree ordained a new valuation of land, for the purpose of imposing heavy taxation. Judas the Galilean, and Zadok the Pharisee, raised the standard of revolt, with the watch-word, "It is not lawful to pay tribute to Cæsar." Again the Romans put down the national uprising, and this time with more than usual severity. The streets of Jerusalem and the temple ran with blood ; and in the end Judas, with the last thousand of his followers, fell on their own swords at Masada, and died free men.

Thus Judea and Samaria became incorporated in the Roman Empire. At first the severity of the Roman government did not make itself apparent. It was the policy of Augustus to spare the provinces, and respect the religious beliefs of the conquered peoples. He permitted no acts of tyranny, and changed in quick succession the Roman governors. The religious susceptibilities of the people were respected, save only that two daily sacrifices were offered for the emperor and the Roman people at the cost of the Jewish nation.

Augustus died 14 A.D., and Tiberius succeeded him. Then the government gradually changed. His procurator, Valerius Gratus, changed the high priests at pleasure, until he found a pliant tool in the Sadducee Joseph, called Caiaphas ; and otherwise interfered with the religious observances. The rule of Pontius Pilate was still more

severe. The Roman cohorts marched through Jerusalem, with the standard surmounted with the image of the emperor, the god of the regiment. The temple was defiled with Roman money and Roman arms. Revolts began. Galileans were slain in Jerusalem, their blood mingling with their sacrifices. Religious agitations were put down with bloodthirsty promptness. Patriotic freebooters again strove to maintain themselves in the country. But, on the whole, while revolt was put down, the Jewish state was not very harshly treated. The feasts were celebrated; they were ever honoured by the custom of pardoning a criminal, whom the people would.

Galilee and the Perea became a separate province, governed by Herod Antipas, as his father had governed Palestine; Philip exercised a similar but milder rule over Gaulonitis; Judea and Samaria was a Roman province ruled by a governor, who lived usually in the Roman town of Cæsarea.

The political condition of the country sheds light on much of our Lord's history. The Romans were accustomed to interfere little with the national customs or laws of the conquered peoples. Hence in Judea, which was directly under Roman rule, the national system of government through the Sanhedrin remained in power, only checked at certain well-defined points by Roman control; while in Galilee and Gaulonitis, native princes were practically unfettered in their government so long as their subjects were quiet, and the tribute was paid. The Sanhedrin were able to persecute Jesus in Judea, and Herod had power to slay Him in Galilee. Before His hour was come, He was able to escape from Herod by crossing the lake to the territories of Philip; He was able to elude the Sanhedrin by crossing the Jordan to the Perea.<sup>1</sup>

#### THE RELIGIOUS CONDITION OF PALESTINE DURING OUR LORD'S MINISTRY.

The old religions of the pagan world had lost most of their power in the age in which our Lord appeared. Scepticism, mingled with

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 37, 38, 47, 49, 129.

gross superstition, abounded throughout the Roman Empire. The pagan world was corrupt to the core.

In Palestine itself religion had become a profitable profession, a fanatical patriotism, or a dreamy mysticism. The great religious parties were the Sadducees, the Pharisees, and the Essenes. (The last-named are not mentioned in the Gospels.) The distinction between Pharisee and Sadducee had grown out of national differences dating from the time of the Captivity, partly social and partly religious. The Jews who returned to Palestine after the Captivity were not in the position of an independent nation. They were the subjects of Persian and then of Greek domination, and the influence exercised by these ruling nationalities was more than political. It affected the thoughts and feelings of large portions of the people. It is almost a commonplace in history, that when a nation is in the position that the Jews were, the native ruling classes are more amenable to foreign influence than the mass of the people, and that patriotic leaders are seldom found among an aristocracy. The Sadducees were nothing more than the Jewish, or rather the sacerdotal, aristocracy; for the priest-nobles were the only aristocracy left to the people. In time of foreign domination, their aim was selfishly to maintain their places of power, and their right to divide among themselves the temple dues, the great source of wealth in Palestine. In time of independence the primary idea of this aristocracy of priests, nobles, and men of wealth—for the three words were in this case synonymous—was conservatism. They aimed at preserving the temple service and the written regulations of the law of Moses. They did so in the spirit of a professional aristocracy, and not with the enthusiasm of religious leaders. In times of national adversity they had witnessed, unmoved, national degradation, and retained their posts and emoluments; in times of comparative prosperity they seemed to teach a cold Epicureanism, which limited man's existence to this present life, and denied a resurrection and a future retribution.

As a natural consequence, notwithstanding their offices and dignity, they were not the leaders of Israel. During the Captivity

the Jews, transformed into a nation of Puritans, had learned to stake their national existence on the strict observance of that ceremonial law which separated them from the heathen. After the return, when the priestly aristocracy were complaisant to innovations ordered by their heathen rulers, the people clung more strictly to the ideas of ceremonial separation. If the priestly aristocracy could degrade the temple service, the ceremonial law was wider than that service, and guarded carefully the personal ceremonial purity of each individual Jew. The people found in the instructions of the synagogue, which in times of national calamity and priestly subservience to foreign domination became the dissenting chapel of Judaism, a means of maintaining this separate national existence which carried with it hopes of a glorious future for the people of God. The Pharisees, Separatists, or Puritans had been the leaders of the people in those darker days of Persian and Greek rule, and when Roman domination came they were the unwavering champions of the ceremonial separation, which was an invisible but invincible defence of the separate national existence of the Jewish people. The Romans found it impossible to deal with the Jews as they had dealt with other nations. The separative ceremonial law, partly Mosaic, but in larger part consisting of deductions from and additions to the Mosaic code, lay between them and the conquered people—a barrier they could not pass. They had succeeded in making Gauls, Britons, Iberians, Greeks, feel themselves to be Roman citizens, but they could never plant the same cosmopolitan feelings in the heart of the Jews. The small nation was thoroughly unmanageable, for the ceremonial wall of separation fortified them against all insidious attacks tending to destroy their separate national existence, and the Pharisees were the leaders of the people in this resistance.

It is easy to see how the gospel with its heart religion found in Sadducees and Pharisees alike its deadly enemies; but it is also plain that a large-hearted Pharisee, like Saul of Tarsus, might come to believe that this gospel, after all, gave him the fulfilment of his religious aspirations. The Sadducean priest-nobles saw in the preaching of Jesus a plebeian revolt to be crushed; the Pharisees

saw in it an overthrow of that ceremonial system which the noblest of them believed to be the present safeguard and the future hope of the chosen people. Still the Pharisee did not live only for the present ; he cherished the hope of a future for his people, and the time came when numbers of the Pharisees were among those who believed and learned to see in the crucified Jesus the Redeemer of Israel and of mankind.



## NOTE I.

## MIRACLES AND PARABLES RECORDED BY MARK.

## Miracles.

1. The demoniac at Capernaum, . . . . .	i. 23-28.
2. Peter's wife's mother, . . . . .	i. 30, 31.
3. The leper, . . . . .	i. 40-45.
4. The paralytic, . . . . .	ii. 3-12.
5. Man with withered hand, . . . . .	iii. 1-5.
6. Stilling of the storm, . . . . .	iv. 35-41.
7. The Gergesene demoniac, . . . . .	v. 1-20.
8. Daughter of Jairus, . . . . .	v. 21-43.
9. The woman with the issue of blood, . . . . .	v. 25-34.
10. Feeding five thousand, . . . . .	vi. 30-44.
11. Walking on the lake, . . . . .	vi. 45-52.
12. Daughter of the Syrophenician woman, . . . . .	vii. 24-30.
13. <b>The deaf and dumb man,</b> <sup>1</sup> . . . . .	vii. 31-37.
14. Feeding four thousand, . . . . .	viii. 1-9.
15. <b>The blind man at Bethsaida,</b> <sup>1</sup> . . . . .	viii. 22-26.
16. The lunatic boy, . . . . .	ix. 17-20.
17. Blind Bartimæus, . . . . .	x. 46-52.
18. The withering of the fruitless fig-tree, . . . . .	xi. 12-14.

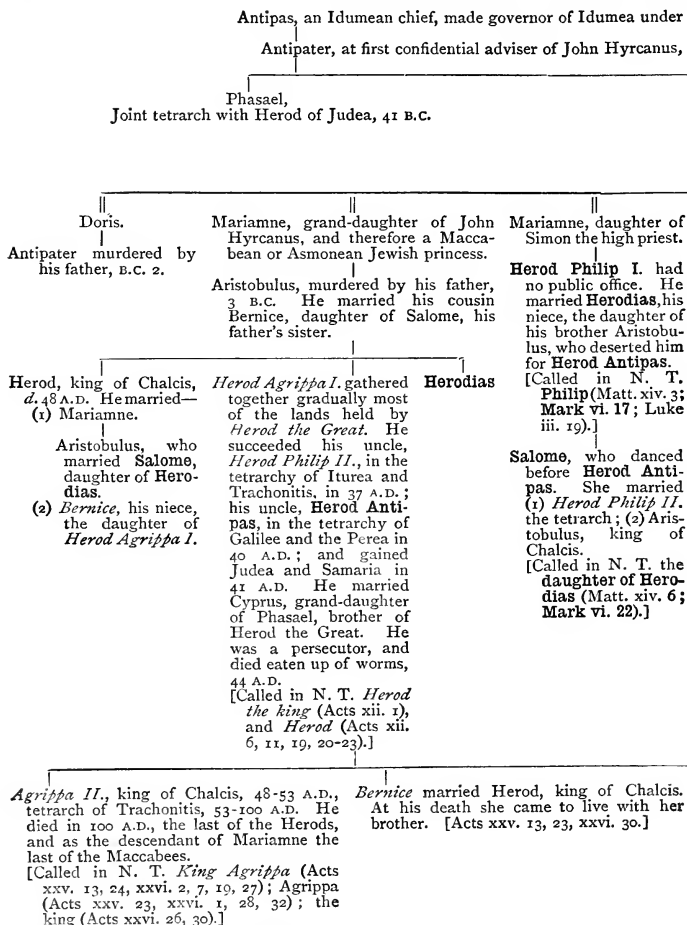
## Parables.

1. The new cloth and the old garment, . . . . .	ii. 21.
2. The new wine and the old wine-skins, . . . . .	ii. 22.
3. The kingdom divided against itself, . . . . .	iii. 23-27.
4. The sower, . . . . .	iv. 3-8.
5. <b>The seed,</b> <sup>1</sup> . . . . .	iv. 26-29.
6. The mustard seed, . . . . .	iv. 30-32.
7. The wicked husbandmen, . . . . .	xii. 1-11.

<sup>1</sup> Only found in Mark.

## NOTE

## GENEALOGICAL TABLE OF



<sup>1</sup> This table contains only the principal members of the Herod family. The names men-

## I I.

THE HEROD FAMILY.<sup>1</sup>

Jannæus, and confidential adviser of Queen Alexandra.

then made procurator of Judea by Julius Cæsar, 47 B.C.

*Herod the Great*,  
Joint tetrarch of Judea, 47 B.C.; sole king, 36 B.C.; died February or March, 1 B.C.  
[Called in the New Testament *Herod the king* (Matt. ii. 1, 3; Luke i. 5); *Herod*  
(Matt. ii. 7, 12, 13, 16, 19, 22); *the king* (Matt. ii. 9).]  
He married ten wives, among whom were—

||  
Malthakè, a Samaritan.

||  
Cleopatra of Jerusalem.

**Herod Antipas**, the tetrarch of Galilee and the Perea. He married—

(1) the daughter of Aretas, king of Arabia;

(2) **Herodias**, the divorced wife of his brother **Herod Philip I.**, and his own niece.

He was deposed and banished 40 A.D.

[Called in N. T. *Herod the tetrarch* (Matt. xiv. 1; Luke iii. 1, 19, ix. 7; Acts xiii. 1); **Herod** (Matt. xiv. 3, 6; **Mark vi. 16-22**; Luke iii. 19, viii. 3, ix. 9, xxiii. 7, 8, 11, 12, 15; Acts iv. 27); **the king** (Matt. xiv. 9; **Mark vi. 22, 25-27**); **King Herod** (**Mark vi. 14**).]

*Archelaus*, ethnarch of Judea, Samaria, and Idumea. Deposed and banished 8-9 A.D. [Matt. ii. 22].

*Herod Philip II.*, tetrarch of Iturea and Trachonitis or Gaulonitis. He built Cæsarea Philippi (Matt. xvi. 13; **Mark viii. 27**) and Bethsaida Julias. He married Salome, who was at once his niece and his grand-niece, the daughter of his brother **Herod Philip I.**, and of **Herodias** his niece.

[Called in N. T. *Philip*, tetrarch of Iturea, Luke iii. 1.]

**Drusilla** (Acts xxiv. 24) married (1) Azizus, king of Emesa;  
(2) Felix, procurator of Judea  
(Acts xxiii. 26, xxiv. 3, 22, 24, 27).  
|  
Agrippa, *d.* 79 A.D.

<sup>1</sup>tioned in the New Testament are in italics; those mentioned in Mark's Gospel, in black letters.

## NOTE III.

## INCIDENTS AND CIRCUMSTANCES RECORDED BY MARK ONLY.

John the Baptist's statement that he was not worthy <i>to stoop down and unloose the latchet of Jesus' shoes</i> , . . . . .	i. 7
The Spirit <i>driveth</i> Jesus to the wilderness, where He was <i>with the wild beasts</i> , . . . . .	i. 12, 13
Zebedee and his sons had <i>hired servants</i> , . . . . .	i. 20
They entered into the house of <i>Simon and Andrew with James and John</i> , . . . . .	i. 29
<i>All the city was gathered about the door</i> of Peter's house in Capernaum, . . . . .	i. 33
Jesus retired to a solitary place <i>a great while before day</i> , . . . .	i. 35
<i>Simon and they that were with him</i> followed after Jesus, . . . .	i. 36
The leper who was cleansed <i>himself spread the report of his cure</i> , . .	i. 45
Jesus came again to <i>Capernaum</i> , . . . . .	ii. 1
The crowd was so great that there was no room, <i>not so much as about the door</i> , . . . . .	ii. 2
The man sick of the palsy was carried by <i>four persons</i> , . . . . .	ii. 3
The bearers <i>uncovered the roof and broke it up</i> , . . . . .	ii. 4
Matthew or Levi was the <i>son of Alphæus</i> , . . . . .	ii. 14
The disciples <i>made a path</i> by plucking the ears of corn (see <i>note</i> ), .	ii. 23
In the days of <i>Abiathar (Ahimelech)</i> the high priest, . . . . .	ii. 26
Jesus looked on the scribes <i>with anger, being grieved at the hardening of their heart</i> , . . . . .	iii. 5
The Pharisees took counsel <i>with the Herodians</i> , and— . . . . .	iii. 6
Jesus in consequence withdrew from the synagogue <i>to the seaside</i> , . .	i. 7
People came from <i>Idumea</i> to hear Jesus, . . . . .	iii. 8
The people so pressed on Jesus that He and the disciples <i>could not so much as eat bread</i> , . . . . .	iii. 20
It was scribes <i>which came down from Jerusalem</i> who said that Jesus was inspired by Beelzebub, . . . . .	iii. 22
Jesus warned the Pharisees of the sin against the Holy Ghost, <i>because they said, He hath an unclean spirit</i> , . . . . .	iii. 30
Jesus <i>looked round on those who sat in a circle around Him</i> , when He said, Behold my mother and my brethren, . . . . .	iii. 34
Jesus, when His disciples asked the meaning of the parable of the Sower, said, <i>How then will ye know all parables?</i> . . . . .	iv. 13
<i>The parable of the Seed</i> , . . . . .	iv. 26-29
Jesus crossed the lake <i>when even was come</i> , . . . . .	iv. 35
The disciples took Jesus across the lake <i>even as He was</i> , . . . . .	iv. 36
While crossing, He fell asleep on the <i>steersman's cushion in the stern</i> , .	iv. 38
The disciples in the storm said, <i>Carest Thou not that we perish?</i> . .	iv. 38
The Gerasene Demoniac <i>cut himself with stones</i> , . . . . .	v. 5

The Demoniac addressed Christ in the formula of exorcism, <i>I adjure thee,</i>	v. 7
The number of swine destroyed was <i>about two thousand,</i>	v. 13
The man out of whom Legion had been cast preached in the <i>Decapolis,</i>	v. 20
Jesus <i>turned Him about in the crowd</i> when the woman with the issue touched Him,	v. 30
Jesus said <i>Talitha cumi</i> to Jairus' daughter,	v. 41
Jesus taught in Nazareth on the <i>Sabbath day,</i>	vi. 2
The people called Him <i>the carpenter,</i>	vi. 3
The disciples <i>anointed the sick with oil,</i>	vi. 13
Herod's guests were his <i>lords, high captains, and chief estates,</i>	vi. 21
Salome <i>went out of the room to her mother</i> Herodias to be told what she should ask from Herod,	vi. 24
Jesus asked the disciples to come <i>to a desert place to rest awhile, because there were so many coming and going that there was not leisure even to eat,</i>	vi. 31
The five thousand men sat down on the <i>green grass,</i>	vi. 39
And in ranks by <i>hundreds and by fifties,</i>	vi. 40
The disciples were amazed at the stilling of the storm; <i>for they had not understood concerning the miracle of the loaves,</i>	vi. 52
The people <i>laid the sick in the streets</i> to be cured by Jesus,	vi. 56
<i>Corban,</i>	vii. 11
<i>Purging all meats,</i>	vii. 19
Jesus had <i>entered into a house</i> when the Syrophœnician woman came to Him,	vii. 24
When the woman went home, she found her daughter <i>laid upon the bed,</i>	vii. 30
Jesus returned to Galilee <i>through Sidon</i> and then by the <i>Decapolis,</i>	vii. 31
<i>The miracle of the deaf and dumb in the Decapolis,</i>	vii. 32-37
Jesus came to the <i>parts of Dalmanutha,</i>	viii. 10
The disciples had taken <i>only one loaf in the boat,</i>	viii. 14
<i>Jesus' three questions in the boat about the spiritual dulness of the disciples,</i>	viii. 17, 18
<i>The miracle of the blind man at Bethsaida</i> <i>Julias,</i>	viii. 22-26
Jesus <i>openly</i> predicted His Passion on the road to Cæsarea Philippi,	viii. 32
When He rebuked Peter, He <i>looked on all the disciples,</i>	viii. 33
At the Transfiguration, Jesus' garments were white <i>as no fuller on earth can white them,</i>	ix. 3
<i>The scribes were disputing with the disciples</i> at the foot of the mount, the crowd <i>ran to greet Jesus,</i> and when they saw Him <i>were amazed,</i>	ix. 15
The demoniac boy was <i>dumb,</i> he <i>gnashed his teeth,</i> he <i>pined away,</i> he <i>fell down</i> and <i>rolled about foaming,</i>	ix. 17, 18
Jesus <i>questioned the father about the case,</i>	ix. 21
<i>The father's cry for faith,</i>	ix. 24

<i>The boy fell as dead, and the cry of the people that he was dead,</i>	ix. 26
Jesus' question about the disciples disputing,	ix. 33
Jesus sat down and called the Twelve to Him,	ix. 35
Jesus took the little child in His arms, and spoke to His disciples,	ix. 36
Jesus took the children in His arms to bless them,	x. 16
Jesus was much displeased with the disciples rebuking the mothers,	x. 14
The rich young ruler came running and knelt,	x. 17
Among the commandments Jesus places, <i>Defraud not,</i>	x. 19
Jesus, beholding the young ruler, loved him, and told him to take up his cross,	x. 21
When he had gone, Jesus looked round about on His disciples,	x. 23
The disciples shall receive an hundredfold, but with persecutions,	x. 30
Leaving Ephraim, Jesus went on walking before His disciples,	x. 32
The blind man at Jericho was <i>Bartimæus the son of Timæus,</i>	x. 46
The words of comfort by the crowd, and the leaping up of the blind man,	x. 49, 50
The details of the account of getting the colt for the triumphal entry,	xi. 4
The Hosanna for the kingdom,	xi. 10
Jesus saw the fruitless fig-tree afar off,	xi. 13
Jesus would not suffer any man to carry vessels through the temple courts,	xi. 16
The chief priests and scribes feared Jesus,	xi. 18
Every evening Jesus returned to Bethany with the Twelve,	xi. 19
Jesus kept walking as well as teaching in the temple,	xi. 27
The admiring response of the scribe who asked the question about the greatest commandment,	xii. 32-34
Jesus in the temple court sat over against the treasury,	xii. 41
On the mount of Olives, Jesus sat over against the temple,	xiii. 3
The disciples Peter, James, John, and Andrew asked an explanation,	xiii. 3
Mary at Bethany broke the alabaster box,	xiv. 3
Ye have the poor with you always, whensoever ye will ye may do them good,	xiv. 7
Abba, Father,	xiv. 36
The narrative of the young man with the linen cloth,	xiv. 51, 52
The officers of the chief priests received Jesus with blows of their hands,	xiv. 65
Simon the Cyrenian was father of Alexander and Rufus,	xv. 21
Jesus was crucified at the third hour,	xv. 25
The centurion who had charge of the crucifixion stood over against Jesus,	xv. 39
Salome was present at the crucifixion,	xv. 40
The preparation was the day before the Sabbath,	xv. 42
Pilate marvelled that Jesus had died so soon, and questioned the centurion,	xv. 44
Salome went to the sepulchre,	xvi. 1

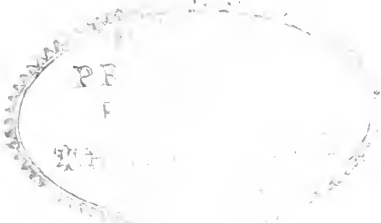
## NOTE IV.

## QUOTATIONS FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT FOUND IN MARK.

Behold, I send My messenger, . . . . .	i. 2—Mal. iii. 1
Prepare ye the way of the Lord, . . . . .	i. 3—Isa. xl. 3
Seeing ye may see, and not perceive, . . . . .	iv. 12—Isa. vi. 9, 10
This people honoureth Me with their lips, . . . . .	vii. 6, 7—Isa. xxix. 13
Honour thy father and mother, . . . . .	vii. 10—Ex. xx. 12
Whoso curseth father or mother, . . . . .	vii. 10—Ex. xxi. 17
Where their worm dieth not, . . . . .	ix. 44—Isa. lxvi. 23
God made them male and female, . . . . .	x. 6—Gen. i. 27
They twain shall be one flesh, . . . . .	x. 7, 8—Gen. ii. 24
Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, . . . . .	x. 19—Ex. xx. 13, 14
Hosanna! Blessed is He that cometh, . . . . .	xi. 9—Ps. cxviii. 26
My house shall be called . . . house of prayer, . . . . .	xi. 17—Isa. lvi. 7
Ye have made it a den of thieves, . . . . .	xi. 17—Jer. vii. 11
The stone which the builders rejected, . . . . .	xii. 10, 11—Ps. cxviii. 22
If a man's brother die and leave, . . . . .	xii. 19—Deut. xxv. 5
I am the God of Abraham, Isaac, etc., . . . . .	xii. 26—Ex. iii. 6
The Lord our God is one Lord, . . . . .	xii. 29—Deut. vi. 4
Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, . . . . .	xii. 30—Deut. vi. 5
Thou shalt love thy neighbour, . . . . .	xii. 31—Lev. xix. 18
The Lord said to my Lord, Sit Thou on, . . . . .	xii. 36—Ps. cx. 1
I will smite the Shepherd, . . . . .	xiv. 27—Zech. xiii. 7
He was numbered with the transgressors, . . . . .	xv. 28—Isa. liii. 12
My God! My God! why hast Thou forsaken Me? . . . . .	xv. 34—Ps. xxii. 1







# THE GOSPEL OF ST. MARK.

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CHAP. I. 1 **T**HE beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God ;

- 2 As it is written in the prophets,<sup>1</sup>  
Behold, I send my messenger before thy face,  
Which shall prepare thy way before thee.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Isaiah the prophet

<sup>2</sup> omit before thee

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## I.—THE PREPARATION AND YEAR OF QUIET WORK IN JUDEA AND GALILEE, I. 1-13.

I.—JOHN THE BAPTIST THE FORERUNNER, i. 1-8 : Matt. iii. 1-12 ; Luke iii. 1-20 ; John i. 19-28.

I. The first verse is the title of the book.

**The beginning.** Mark omits the genealogies and the gospel of the infancy, and begins with the work of John the forerunner. See Introduction, p. 26.

**Gospel of Jesus Christ.** The glad tidings or good news which tell the words and works of the Saviour. Jesus, *Saviour* (Matt. i. 21), and Christ, *Messiah* or *Anointed*. Compare Introduction, p. 11.

**Son of God.** Man needs a Divine Saviour, and Jesus is Son of God as well as "Son of man" and "Son of David" (Matt. i. 1). Mark's Gospel is singularly full of the deeds of Jesus the Saviour.

If the Gospel of Mark be in a special sense the Gospel of Peter (Introduction, p. 15), it is interesting to notice how the statement of the divinity of our Lord, which formed the *confession* of Peter (Matt. xvi. 16), is put in the very forefront of its teaching, in the title of the book.

2. The better reading seems to be *in Isaiah the prophet*. The quotation is from Isa. xl. 3 : *The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God*. There may also be a reference to Mal. iii. 1 and iv. 5, 6. With one doubtful exception (xv. 28), this is the only quotation made by Mark himself from Old Testament prophecy. See Introduction, p. 34, where the fewness of

- 3 The voice of one crying in the wilderness,  
 Prepare ye<sup>1</sup> the way of the Lord,  
 Make his paths straight.
- 4 John did baptize in<sup>2</sup> the wilderness, and preach the baptism  
 5 of repentance for<sup>3</sup> the remission of sins. And there went  
 out unto him all the land of Judea, and they of Jerusalem,  
 and were all<sup>4</sup> baptized of him in the river Jordan, confessing

<sup>1</sup> Make ye ready<sup>2</sup> John came, who baptized<sup>3</sup> unto<sup>4</sup> and they were baptized

such references is shown to be one of the reasons for supposing that Mark wrote his Gospel for Gentile Christians.

3. **Prepare ye.** *Make ye ready*, as if the Baptist listening heard the voice of Old Testament prophecy sounding down the ages, and called the people to hear and obey. God begins and ends the work of grace in the heart; but there must be a response from man, a making ready on man's part. The imagery in John's message would be quite familiar to an Eastern audience. Previous to a journey of king or sultan, a proclamation is issued, and literally, stones are gathered out of the ways, crooked parts of the road are made straight, and rough places plain. Josephus, when describing a march of Vespasian, says that with the vanguard were "such as were to make the road even and straight, and if it were anywhere rough and hard to be passed over, to plane it, and to cut down the woods that hindered their march, that the army might not be tired." There was also a legend among the Jews that the Pillar of Fire and Cloud levelled the hills, and filled up the valleys before the march of the children of Israel through the desert. John prepared the way for Jesus by telling the people of their sins, and bringing conviction home to their hearts.

4. **The wilderness**, *i.e.* the great Jewish desert, which included the whole eastern portion of the tribe of Judah. It was the sloping down of the limestone mountain range of Central Palestine into the deep valley of the Jordan. This mountain highland is rugged and dreary beyond description; full of bare rocks, rich in hollows, in which David of old hid himself from Saul; full of sandy plains, with scarce a village or even farm-house.

John did not continue always in the same place. The principal stations mentioned in the New Testament were near the Jericho ford, near the Bethshean ford, and in a secluded valley not far from Jerusalem. Compare p. 44.

**Baptism of repentance.** The first word of John's ministry was Repent; his baptism was for those who had repented, and foretold the purification of mind and heart which comes from the washing away our sins in the blood of Christ. "If the great way-maker do not cast down hills, and raise up valleys, in the bosoms of men, there is no passage for Christ. Never will Christ come into that soul, where the herald of repentance hath not been before Him."

5. **All the land.** Matthew (iii. 5) says: *Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan.* Sadducees and Pharisees, "the people," publicans and soldiers, are mentioned among the crowds who gathered to hear his preaching (Luke iii. 10-14). Josephus, who tells us a good deal about the Baptist's ministry, makes it plain that he

6 their sins. And John was clothed with camel's hair, and with a girdle of a skin<sup>1</sup> about his loins; and he did eat  
7 locusts and wild honey; and preached, saying, There cometh one mightier than I after me,<sup>2</sup> the latchet of whose shoes I  
8 am not worthy to stoop down and unloose. I indeed have baptized you<sup>3</sup> with water: but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost.

<sup>1</sup> leathern girdle<sup>2</sup> There cometh after me he that is mightier than I<sup>3</sup> baptized

attracted a great deal of attention not merely from the common people, but from the religious and political leaders of the nation. He says: "John was a good man, and commanded the Jews to exercise virtue both as to righteousness towards one another, and piety towards God, and so to come to baptism."

6. **Was clothed.** The Baptist's *clothing* was like Elijah's (2 Kings i. 8); a coarse kind of sackcloth made out of the strongest hairs of the camel. His girdle, commonly in the East a rich sash of silk or cotton embroidered with silver or gold, was of untanned leather like those worn by the labourers or the Bedouin of the present day. His *food* was of the plainest,—locusts, which the poorer people of the district still eat, and honey, which the wild bees store in the crevices of the limestone rocks (Dr. Tristram, *The Land of Israel*, p. 88). His *message*, says Dr. Maclear, was (1) that the members of the elect nation were *all* morally unclean, and that *all* needed moral and spiritual regeneration; (2) that One mightier than he was coming; (3) that He would baptize with the Holy Ghost. It was a gospel sermon, preaching sorrow for sin, pardon, and Christ.

7. **Latchet** was the thong fastening the sandal to the foot; our shoe-lace. The sandals of great persons were fastened and untied by their inferior slaves.

"John, great prophet as he was, with influence sufficient to make even Herod tremble for his throne, is unworthy to be the meanest slave of the Stronger One—the Son of God" (Carr). Every preacher should be, like John, a messenger who proclaims the coming of the Lord; and he will do this best when he sinks his own personality, and exhibits Jesus only. "For I determined," said Paul, "not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified" (1 Cor. ii. 2).

8. **With water . . . with the Holy Ghost**, lit. *in water . . . in the Holy Ghost*. The preposition in Hellenistic Greek may mean—(1) the instrument, or (2) the surrounding influence or element in which an act takes place. Hence *with* the Holy Ghost may mean by means of, through the instrumentality of, the Holy Ghost, or surrounded by, and influenced by, the Holy Ghost. Westcott and Hort omit the article from the text, but this omission does not alter the sense. John's contrast of himself with Jesus, implies that Jesus could search the heart in a way that His forerunner could not do; He could penetrate within, beyond the sphere of the material, external life, to the heart and the spirit; He could act on the spirit with His Spirit; He could bestow on man that heavenly influence needed to purify the heart and the life. This baptism of the Spirit, predicted by John, had been foretold by earlier prophets, by Isa. xlv. 3, and by Joel ii. 28. The prediction was fulfilled in a visible

9 And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from

fashion at Pentecost (Acts i. 5, ii. 3), and in the later outpourings after baptism (Acts xi. 15, 16). It is continually being fulfilled without external visible manifestations in all Christians when they experience that peace in believing, and learn to live that life of new obedience which are among the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

"The Baptist started from the Messianic hope as the one thing remaining to the nation promising a better future; but he perceived what had to be immediately done in connection with it, according to the requirements of the true religion, and he was the first man consistent and daring enough actually to do it. . . . Every individual had to prepare himself for the true kingdom, and as a regenerate man, receptive simply for everything that is pure and good,—as a man who will not start back from the Highest One should He come,—look for the mysterious but certain coming of the Lord. . . . The submersion in the depth of the flowing water by the hand of the Baptist became the most effective, visible, and sensible symbol of the moral purification of this generation. . . . and this deep submersion, by the hand of a confessor, with this strict confession of sin, this vow and this absolution, of which it was meant to be the symbol, and this whole preparation for the Messiah, was something which had never before existed, and was the most striking sign of that mighty change of mind which was now about to be wrought in Israel more fully than before" (Ewald).

II.—OUR LORD'S JOURNEY TO JUDEA TO BE BAPTIZED, i. 9-11:  
Matt. iii. 13-17; Luke iii. 21, 22; John i. 29-42.

9. In those days, *i.e.* when John was baptizing, our Lord being then thirty years of age (Luke iii. 23), the time at which the Levite entered on "the service of the ministry." It was about May or June A.D. 29, according to Bosanquet; about January A.D. 27, according to Andrews. It is somewhat difficult to fix the dates of the principal events in the life of our Lord; but the researches of Bosanquet and Lauth, published in the *Transactions of the Society of Biblical Archaeology*, are now almost universally accepted. These investigations have fixed, almost beyond a doubt, the year 3 before the Christian era as the date of the Nativity. The data on which the computation is founded are—(1) the first rule of Quirinus (Cyrenius) in Syria (Luke ii. 2); (2) the accession of Tiberius, A.D. 14; (3) the Paschal full moon at the time of the crucifixion, probably A.D. 33; (4) the reign of Herod, which began in B.C. 36, and ended in B.C. 1. Founding on all these, Mr. J. W. Bosanquet has arranged the following chronological table of our Lord's life:—

Birth of Jesus in autumn, . . . . .	B.C. 3	
Jesus one year old in autumn, . . . . .	B.C. 2	
Jesus two years old in autumn, . . . . .	B.C. 1	
		Death of Herod in February or March, B.C. 1
		Soon after the lunar eclipse, 10th
		January, . . . . . 1
Jesus three years old in autumn, . . . . .	A.D. 1	
Jesus ten years old in autumn, . . . . .	A.D. 8	
Jesus thirty years old in autumn, . . . . .	A.D. 28	
		The fifteenth year of Tiberius ended
		in August, . . . . . A.D. 29
Jesus thirty-one years old in autumn, . . . . .	A.D. 29	

"Now, in the *fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar* . . . the word of God came unto John, the son of Zecharias, in the wilderness. . . . And

Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan.  
 10 And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened,<sup>1</sup> and the Spirit like a dove descending upon

<sup>1</sup> rent asunder

Jesus Himself was about thirty years of age on beginning (His work)," Luke iii. 1, 23. The fifteenth year of Tiberius ended in August A.D. 29, and Jesus was *about thirty years of age* between autumn A.D. 28 and autumn A.D. 29. From this Mr. Bosanquet concludes that—

		The baptism of Jesus took place in	
		May or June, . . .	A.D. 29
Jesus thirty - two years old in autumn, . . .	A.D. 30	First Passover—spring (April), . . .	A.D. 30
Jesus thirty - three years old in autumn, . . .	A.D. 31	Second Passover—spring, . . .	A.D. 31
Jesus thirty - four years old in autumn, . . .	A.D. 32	Third Passover—spring, . . .	A.D. 32
Jesus <i>about</i> thirty-four in April, . . .	A.D. 33	The crucifixion on 3rd April (old style) at the full moon on Friday, <sup>1</sup>	A.D. 33

**Nazareth of Galilee.** "In many respects there was divine fitness in this spot for the human growth of Jesus—'as a tender plant and a root out of the dry ground.' Apart from the obscurity and evil fame of Nazareth, which were meant to teach lessons similar to those of which we have just spoken, we may notice—(i.) its *seclusion*. It lies in a narrow cleft in the limestone hills which form the boundary of Zebulun, entirely out of the ordinary roads of commerce, so that none could say that our Lord had learnt either from Gentiles or from Rabbis; (ii.) its *beauty and peacefulness*. The flowers of Nazareth are famous, and the appearance of its inhabitants shows its healthiness. It was a home of humble peace and plenty. The fields of its green valley are fruitful, and the view from the hill which overshadows it, is one of the loveliest and most historically striking in all Palestine" (Farrar). Nazareth is said to mean *the protectress* (Heb. *Natsar*). The Saviour, who from eternity had lain hid in the counsel of God until the fulness of time should come, after He did manifest Himself, thought fit to lie hid in Nazareth for the space of thirty years.

**Baptized in Jordan**, either at the ford near Jericho, or more probably at the old ford near Succoth, Bethany beyond Jordan. Jesus without sins to be confessed, repented of, and pardoned, by this act made Himself one with His people whom He came to save.

"He that was formerly circumcised would now be baptized. What is baptism but an evangelical circumcision? What was circumcision but a legal baptism? One both supplied and succeeded the other; yet the author of both will undergo both. He would be circumcised to sanctify His Church that was; and baptized to sanctify His Church that should be, that so, in both Testaments, He might open a way into heaven" (Hall).

**10. Straightway.** Mark's favourite connecting word, indicating rapid movement. It probably means here, that Jesus did not remain in the water to receive the instruction usually given to proselytes.

**He saw the heavens opened.** Jesus was at prayer, Luke tells us (iii. 21), when the heavens were cleft or rent asunder, the light streamed down, and

<sup>1</sup> See *Transactions of Society of Biblical Archaeology* for 1872, p. 94, and for 1878, p. 247.

- 11 him : and there came a voice from heaven, *saying*,<sup>1</sup> Thou art my beloved Son, in whom<sup>2</sup> I am well pleased.  
 12 And immediately<sup>3</sup> the spirit driveth him into the wilder-  
 13 ness. And he was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted of Satan ; and was with the wild beasts ; and the angels ministered unto him.

<sup>1</sup> and a voice came out of the heavens<sup>2</sup> in thee<sup>3</sup> straightway

the voice was heard. From a comparison of the narratives, it is probable that either John and Jesus were alone, or that they only saw the vision and heard the voice. The descent was the baptism of the Holy Ghost, of which the other baptism was the sign and promise. It was the formal inauguration of Jesus to His ministry, and the revelation was made to Him in His humanity. "Now that the God of heaven is baptized, the heavens open unto Him, which are opened unto all the faithful by Him" (Hall).

11. A voice from heaven came thrice to our Lord : (1) here at His baptism ; (2) at the transfiguration, Mark ix. 7 ; (3) in the temple-court, John xii. 28. This first voice was the call to His work.

Three were present : the One speaking from heaven, the One standing upon the earth, the One coming down from heaven to earth. Different Persons, all Divine ; the Triune God,—Father, Son, Spirit.

### III.—THE TEMPTATION, i. 12, 13 : Matt. iv. 1-11 ; Luke iv. 1-13.

Driveth him ; vehement impelling ; the expression may denote some innocent shrinking of the flesh. The same phrase is used in Matt. ix. 38, "*send forth labourers.*"

13. Tempted of Satan. For details of temptation, Matt. iv. 1-11 ; Luke iv. 1-13. This temptation gathered together in one sharp, protracted struggle that lifelong tempting which was ended only in Gethsemane, Mark xiv. 36. Jesus was tempted in order "to direct us whither to go for succour when we are tempted, even to Him who suffered being tempted" (Matthew Henry). "Thou shalt be sure to be assailed by Satan, when thou hast received the greatest enlargements from heaven" (Leighton). It is not in the power either of gifts or seals of grace to deliver us from the assaults of Satan, and these are the more apt to come when we begin some good work for God. "No sooner doth God say, *This is my Son*, than Satan says, *If thou be the Son of God.*" Hence we may learn that as ill counsel is the fault of the giver and not of the refuser, so what hurts us in temptation is not the presenting of temptations but their entertainment.

In the wilderness . . . with the wild beasts. Tradition makes the scene of the temptation a wild region north-west of Jericho, in the centre of which rises Mons Quarantania. Canon Tristram says of the place : "Everywhere around us were the fresh traces of beasts of every kind. . . . The wild boar had been rooting and treading on all sides, the jackals had been hunting in packs on the soft, oozy slime ; the solitary wolf had been prowling about ; and many foxes had singly been beating the district for game ; the solitary hyæna, too, had taken his nocturnal ramble for carcases." This reference to the wild beasts implies that Jesus had been taken into utter solitude far from all, even scattered human habitations.

- 14 Now after that John was put in prison,<sup>1</sup> Jesus came into  
 15 Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God,<sup>2</sup> and  
 saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at  
 hand : repent ye, and believe<sup>3</sup> the gospel.

<sup>1</sup> delivered up<sup>2</sup> the gospel of God<sup>3</sup> in the gospel

*Between the events described and those recorded in the following verses, there occurs the whole history of that period which has been called the Year of Obscurity, or more properly the Year of Quiet Preaching in Judea and Galilee, the months between the temptation of our Lord and the imprisonment of John the Baptist, i.e., according to Andrews' reckoning, from January A.D. 27 to April or May A.D. 28; according to Bosanquet, from May or June A.D. 29 to May A.D. 30. For the events omitted see Analysis, p. 35.*

## II.—THE YEAR OF POPULARITY—CHRIST'S MINISTRY IN GALILEE, I. 14–VI. 30.

*From the imprisonment of John the Baptist till his death. Our Lord from Capernaum, "His own city," made preaching journeys through Galilee.*

### I.—FIRST SOJOURN IN CAPERNAUM, i. 14–34.

1. *Preaching the kingdom. Four disciples called, 14–20: Matt. iv. 12–22; Luke iv. 14–41.*

#### 14. Put in prison, ch. vi. 17–20.

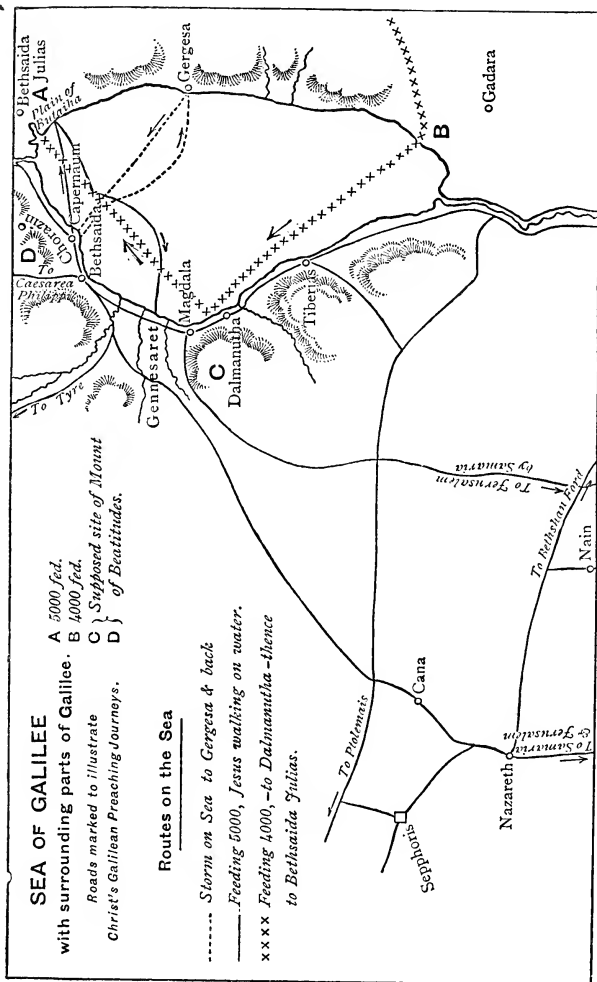
Galilee (see Map, p. 72; also Introduction, p. 40) was the richest and most populous part of Palestine, producing wheat, wine, and oil; so fertile that it was entirely cultivated with the spade, like a garden. The people crowded in numberless populous villages, engaged in agriculture, woollen manufacture, dyeing, weaving linen, fishcuring, were hardy, brave, and less bigoted than the Judeans. The Rabbis said, "In Galilee they wade in oil."

The gospel of the kingdom of God, i.e. the good news of salvation through Christ. Matthew's phrase is, kingdom of heaven; Paul's, heavenly kingdom. The phrase kingdom of God, or kingdom of heaven, has several meanings in the New Testament—(1) The presence of Christ upon earth (Matt. iii. 2). (2) The Second Coming of Christ (Matt. xvi. 28). (3) His influence on the heart (Rom. xiv. 17). (4) Christianity as a Church (Matt. xvi. 9). (5) Christianity as a faith (Matt. xiii. 11). (6) The life eternal (Matt. viii. 11). It points out sin to be turned from with sorrow, Christ to be believed in with joy.

15. The time is fulfilled, i.e. the preordained and foretold time of the Messiah. This phrase is not found in the parallel passages of the other Gospels, and suggests Paul's "in the fulness of time" (Gal. iv. 4; Eph. i. 10).

The kingdom of God is at hand. The thought of a kingdom of God was not a new one to the Jews; it had found expression continually in the Old Testament, and was connected with the Jewish idea of the theocracy or direct rule of God, shadowed forth in the earthly kingdom. Jesus took the phrase which in the Old Testament had attained its deepest significance in Dan. vii. 14, and gave it a new and yet deeper spiritual significance. This preaching of the kingdom always included the two ideas contained in the last clause:—

**Repent ye and believe.** *Repentance* in the original means rather more  
 [Continued on p. 74]





## MAP OF SEA OF GALILEE.

The Sea of Galilee lies in a deep gorge which extends from the foot of Mount Hermon to the foot of Mount Hor. Down this gorge flows the Jordan, through the Waters of Merom, through the Sea of Galilee to the Dead Sea.

The Sea of Galilee is pear-shaped, and is  $12\frac{1}{2}$  miles long,  $6\frac{3}{4}$  broad in its widest part. The surface is 682·5 feet below the level of the ocean. It has various names in Scripture. It is called—(1) *The Sea of Chinneroth*, from its harp-like form, or else from a town of that name on or near its shores (Num. xxxiv. 11; Josh. xii. 3; cf. Josh. xix. 35). (2) *The Sea of Galilee*, from the province on its western shore (Matt. iv. 18; Mark vii. 31). (3) *The Lake of Gennesareth*, which many think to be a corruption of the old name Chinneroth, but which has also been said to mean the *gardens of princes* (Luke v. 1). (4) *The Sea of Tiberias*, from Tiberias, which, although only recently founded by Herod Antipas in the time of our Lord, had grown to be a large and flourishing town by the time that John wrote his Gospel (John xxi. 1). (5) *The Sea* (Matt. iv. 15).

In our Lord's time the western shore of the lake was the busiest and most populous part of Galilee, while the eastern was for the most part a solitude.

## Jesus' Preaching Journeys in Galilee, p. 45.

i. FROM CAPERNAUM THROUGH THE NEIGHBOURING TOWNS—Chorazin, Bethsaida, Magdala, and then through a portion of Galilee (Mark i. 35-45; Matt. viii. 1-4; Luke iv. 42-44, v. 12-16).

ii. FROM CAPERNAUM TO MOUNT OF BEATITUDES—the Sermon on the Mount, Matt. v.-vii.—and back again to Capernaum. The mount either *Karân Hattin* (C), lying to the west of Magdala, or more probably the high land which rose behind Capernaum (D).

The twelve disciples chosen (Matt. x. 1-4; Luke vi. 12-16).

iii. FROM CAPERNAUM TO NAIN, THROUGH THE NEIGHBOURING COUNTRY, BACK TO CAPERNAUM.

Widow's son raised; message from John the Baptist; dines with Simon the Pharisee; makes a circuit in Galilee with the Twelve (Luke vii. 18-viii. 3).

iv. FROM CAPERNAUM TO GERGESA AND BACK.

To the shore of the lake, parables of the kingdom, across the Sea of Galilee, storm stilled, Gergesa, the demoniac cured, back to Capernaum (Mark iv. 1-v. 20; Matt. xiii. 1-53, viii. 18-34; Luke viii. 4-18, 22-39).

v. FROM CAPERNAUM TO NAZARETH AND BACK.

The second rejection at Nazareth; the mission of the Twelve; the news of the death of John the Baptist (Mark vi. 1-29; Matt. xiii. 54-58, x., xiv. 1-12; Luke ix. 1-9).

The Galilean journeys of Flight (p. 47) are partly within this map and partly beyond it.

(1) To the Plain of Butaiha, where 5000 were fed (A).

(2) To Tyre and Sidon . . . Decapolis to S.E. corner of Sea of Galilee, where 4000 were fed (B); across to Dalmanutha.

(3) Across the sea to Bethsaida Julias.

16 Now as he walked by<sup>1</sup> the sea of Galilee, he saw Simon  
and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea : for they  
17 were fishers. And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me,  
18 and I will make you to become fishers of men. And straight-  
19 way they forsook<sup>2</sup> their nets, and followed him. And when

---

<sup>1</sup> And passing along by the sea

<sup>2</sup> left

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than sorrow or regret for sin ; it is rather a change of life, of heart, or of motive of action. *Believe* in the gospel, not *believe* the gospel, is the more correct translation. The command is to more than a historical faith or a quiet assent to a proposition ; it is to trust the good news proclaimed. These two keynotes of our Lord's preaching—repentance and faith—are well defined in answers to Q. 86 and 87 of the *Westminster Shorter Catechism* :—“Q. 86. What is faith in Jesus Christ?—A. Faith in Jesus Christ is a saving grace, whereby we receive and rest upon Him alone for salvation, as He is offered to us in the gospel. Q. 87. What is repentance unto life?—A. Repentance unto life is a saving grace, whereby a sinner, out of a true sense of his sin, and apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ, doth, with grief and hatred of his sin, turn from it unto God, with full purpose of, and endeavour after, new obedience.” The preaching of the gospel continues as it began. It is still a call to repent and believe ; to live a life of repentance and a life of faith.

16. Walked. He had come from Nazareth, where He had been rejected (Luke iv. 16–31).

Sea of Galilee. See Map, p. 72 and p. 73.

Simon or Simeon (see Acts xv. 14 ; 2 Pet. 1. 1), a Hebrew name. He was called Peter by Jesus.

Casting a net, literally throwing about, the fisher word for using a hand-net, a circular rope leaded with a tent-shaped net attached, which was thrown from boat or land and pulled back by the cord attached ; so in Matt. iv. 18. The net in Matt. xiii. 47, 48 was the large net like our herring-nets ; the net in Luke v. 4–9 was the bag or basket net for fishing deep pools.

The phrase used, “casting a net,” is one of Mark's vivid and graphic touches.

17. Come ye after me. They had met Jesus before while they were disciples of John, and had followed Him from Bethabara to Galilee, where they had been with Jesus when He manifested forth His glory in His earlier miracles. The phrase, *Come ye after me*, means, *Be my disciples*, and refers to the custom of the rabbi or teacher walking before his scholars. “Christ will have followers. If He set up a school, He will have scholars ; if He set up His standard, He will have soldiers ; if He preach, He will have hearers” (Matt. Henry).

Fishers of men. The phrase is a condensed parable which our Lord Himself expanded in Matt. xiii. 47–50, where He compared the kingdom of heaven to a net. It is probable that these words were spoken after Jesus had in the miraculous draught of fishes (Luke v. 1) shown how He could make them successful fishers of the sea, and therefore had peculiar force. The miraculous draught became a “sign” of what Christ would enable them to do in the work He was calling them to.

18. And straightway. Follow Jesus at any cost, and do it promptly.

he had gone a<sup>1</sup> little farther thence, he saw James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, who also were in the ship<sup>2</sup> mending their nets. And straightway he called them: and they left their father Zebedee in the ship<sup>2</sup> with the hired servants, and went after him.

And they went<sup>3</sup> into Capernaum; and straightway on the sabbath day he entered into the synagogue, and taught. And

<sup>1</sup> And going on a little farther<sup>2</sup> boat<sup>3</sup> go

19. **James the son of Zebedee.** From a comparison of texts we learn that the mother of James and John was Salome, frequently and honourably mentioned in the Gospels (Matt. xxvii. 52; Mark xv. 40).

**Mending their nets,** broken by the miraculous draught of fishes (Luke v. 4).

**Ship.** The word means any small craft or vessel, moved by sails or oars, such as fishermen use.

20. **He called them.** The preparation of these two pairs of brotherly brothers was gradual. (1) Disciples of John (John i. 35); (2) directed by him to the *Lamb of God* (John i. 36); (3) invited by our Lord to see where He dwelt (John i. 39); (4) witnesses of His first miracle (John ii. 2); (5) enrolled now among His followers; and (6) to be formally called afterwards (Maclear).

**With the hired servants.** This information seems to show that Zebedee was in a somewhat better position than most Galilean peasants. He had two boats (Luke v. 7); his son John was known to some of the priestly aristocracy of Jerusalem (John xviii. 15). "These disciples did not so wholly and utterly forsake their goods and friends as never afterwards to use them any more upon occasion; but they forsook them in regard of the ordinary use of them, and so far forth only as they might hinder them in their ordinary conversing with Christ, and following of Him" (Petter).

2. *A Sabbath day's work at Capernaum*—(1) *The Cure of the Demoniac*, i. 21-28: Luke iv. 33-37.

21. **Capernaum.** The site of Capernaum is not yet determined. Authorities are almost equally divided in favour of one or other of two places on the north-western shore of the lake, *Tell Hum*, about five miles south-west of the entrance of the Jordan into the lake, or *Khan Minyeh*, two or three miles south-west of Tell Hum. In the Map, p. 72, the former site has been preferred. It was in the very centre of the most populous district in Palestine, and was a place of some importance, as it was a customs station (Matt. ix. 9; Luke v. 27), and was the station of a detachment of Roman soldiers (Matt. viii. 5, 9; Luke vii. 1, 8); on the other hand, it could not have been a very large town, as it had only one synagogue.

**The synagogue, and their synagogue** (23), implying there was only one; it had been built by the centurion (Luke vii. 5). The synagogue was usually built on the highest ground in the town, and in most cases its position was made known by a tall wooden pole planted like a flagstaff before the door. The worship of the synagogue was meant to serve instead of participation in the temple service for Jews of the dispersion, and for the inhabitants of the provincial towns, and was held at the hour of sacrifice in the temple. At the

they were astonished at his doctrine :<sup>1</sup> for he taught them as  
 23 one that had authority, and not as the scribes. And there  
 was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit ; and he

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<sup>1</sup> teaching

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time of Jesus every small town in Palestine had at least one synagogue, and it was regarded as a duty enjoined on the rich to build synagogues for the people of the poorer villages (Luke vii. 5). They were for the most part simple rectangular walls with a portico. The men and women sat apart on separate benches. The seats in front were reserved for the elders of the synagogue, and for well-known scribes. The furniture consisted of an ark, or chest for the rolls of Scripture, and a reading desk. The officials of the synagogue were—(1) the college or session of elders, presided over by a chief or ruler ; (2) the secretary, messenger or apostle, who communicated either by letter or by visit, when necessary, with other synagogues ; (3) the collectors of alms, or deacons. The worship of the synagogue consisted in—(1) *Prayers* enjoined by the law, recited by the reader, and joined in by the congregation ; while they were recited the people stood ; on feast days the same prayers were repeated more than once. (2) *Reading the Law*—a reader read the portion of the law (Pentateuch) for the day, verse by verse, and when each verse was read a translator gave the Targum or Aramaic paraphrase translation ; sometimes in the time of Christ the translation was given in Greek. (3) *Reading the Prophets* in the same fashion. (4) *Sermon*, or Midrash, which was usually a practical application of the passage read from the Prophets. There was no singing in the synagogue service.

22. **The scribes**, called also lawyers (Matt. xxii. 35) and doctors of the law (Luke v. 17), explained the law "according to the tradition of the elders," and their teaching consisted of numerous quotations from learned Rabbis. Christ spoke directly from His heart to the heart and conscience of His hearers. Any well-known teacher was allowed to preach the sermon or Midrash in the Jewish synagogue.

23. **With an unclean spirit**, lit. *in* an unclean spirit, as we say "in drink," i.e. within its influence, under its power, so that it was the demon that cried, not the man.

The question of **demoniac possession** suggested by this miracle is too wide to be discussed here. The fact of "possession" is continually referred to in the Gospels, but no explanation is ever given, and the opinions of theologians differ on the subject. On the one hand, it may be gathered from Scripture—(1) that our Lord Himself refers "possession" to Satanic agency (Luke x. 17-19, xi. 14-22) ; (2) that "possession" of the body by a demon is distinguished from Satanic influence in the soul ; (3) that "possession" is distinguished from disease, and perhaps from lunacy (though the lunacy may really be epilepsy), as in Mark i. 32, "all that were diseased, and them that were possessed with devils," and in Matt. iv. 24, "those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatic, and those that had the palsy ;" (4) that "possession" was commonly accompanied by infirmity or disease, such as dumbness, blindness, the symptoms of epilepsy or violent insanity (Matt. ix. 32, xii. 22 ; Mark ix. 17-27, v. 1-5). On the other hand, it must be remembered (1) that the Jews attributed nearly all diseases, and especially all cerebral or mental diseases, to the direct power of Satan, or at least to the

24 cried out, saying, Let *us* alone ;<sup>1</sup> what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us?  
 25 I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God. And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him.  
 26 And when the unclean spirit had torn him, and cried<sup>2</sup> with a  
 27 loud voice, he came out of him. And they were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What thing is this? what new doctrine *is* this? for with authority commandeth he even the unclean spirits, and they

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<sup>1</sup> saying, What have

<sup>2</sup> tearing him and crying

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immediate action of evil spirits; (2) that our Lord assents to this ordinary mode of speaking, and ascribes ordinary disease to direct satanic agency, as in Luke xiii. 16, "This woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years;" (3) that Scripture commonly classes those "possessed" with maniacs. Upon the whole, it seems best to conclude that there was, in the case of those possessed, the exertion of a unique power of the spirit of evil altogether distinct from what is to be seen either in mental or bodily disease. Physicians assert that there are still cases which cannot be otherwise explained in Eastern lands, as in Syria and in India. May we not see even in our own country some analogy to these cases of possession in the strange and awful fact quite common among us, where sin lays hold on a man's soul by first taking possession of his body, where every tissue of the body becomes a temptation to sin, a chain to bind to sinful habit?

24. **Let us alone.** The Greek word so translated is an inarticulate cry, like a criminal's when he feels the hand of the officer of justice on his arm, implying a certain fearful looking for of judgment. The word is omitted in the best MSS. in this place; it has probably been inserted from the corresponding passage in Luke iv. 34.

**The Holy One of God.** At Christ's baptism God had spoken, "Thou art my beloved Son;" and now Satan through this demoniac also bears witness, and between the two voices there was the rejection at Nazareth.

25. **Hold thy peace.** Jesus cannot accept the testimony of devils (Acts xvi. 16-18), He cannot give any ground for the accusation that He cast out devils by Beelzebub. The word means "*be muzzled*;" the word used by Christ in calming the storm, Mark iv. 39; a word for a beast.

26. **Had torn him.** Convulsing him, epileptically; for it is clear from Luke's account that the man was not personally injured (iv. 35). "If the devil must give way, yet he rages fearfully."

27. **They were all amazed.** This miracle of healing the demoniac in Capernaum is the first recorded by Mark and by Luke. The first miracle recorded by Matthew is the healing of a leper by a touch (viii. 1-4); the first miracle recorded by John is the turning the water into wine at Cana in Galilee (ii. 1-11). The people who saw the demoniac cured were so astonished that each turned to his neighbour to ask his opinion, and to talk about the deed. They spoke in abrupt interjected sentences, *What is this? a new teaching! With authority He commandeth the unclean spirits, and they obey Him!*

- 28 do obey him.<sup>1</sup> And immediately his fame spread abroad throughout all the region round about Galilee.<sup>2</sup>
- 29 And forthwith,<sup>3</sup> when they were come out of the synagogue, they entered<sup>4</sup> into the house of Simon and Andrew, with
- 30 James and John. But Simon's wife's mother lay sick of a
- 31 fever, and anon<sup>3</sup> they tell him of her. And he came and took her by the hand, and lifted<sup>5</sup> her up; and immediately the fever left her, and she ministered unto them.
- 32 And at even, when the sun did set, they brought unto him all that were diseased,<sup>6</sup> and them that were possessed with
- 33 devils. And all the city was gathered together at the door.
- 34 And he healed many that were sick of divers diseases, and

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<sup>1</sup> What is this? A new teaching! With authority he commandeth even the unclean spirits, and they obey him.

<sup>2</sup> And the report of him went out straightway everywhere into all the region of Galilee round about.

<sup>3</sup> straightway

<sup>4</sup> came

<sup>5</sup> raised

<sup>6</sup> sick

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28. His fame, more correctly *the report of Him*, the report of what He had done spread like wildfire.

Round about Galilee, more correctly, *into all the region of Galilee round about*, i.e. round about Capernaum.

(2) *The Cure of Peter's wife's mother, and many others*, i. 29-34:

Matt. viii. 14-17; Luke iv. 38-41.

30. Sick of a fever. A great fever, Luke says; typhus, not the low intermittent fever.

Tell him, "with wistfulness in their hearts, no doubt" (Morison). "Wherever Christ comes, He comes to do good, and will richly pay for His entertainment" (M. Henry).

31. Ministered unto them. The fever gone; but the woman is not left weak as when fevers go naturally, she is strong enough to do the house work.

32. When the sun did set. They waited till sunset, when the Jewish Sabbath ended. This passage, with the corresponding one in Matt. viii. 16, is what is called an undesigned coincidence. Matthew tells us it was even, Mark and Luke give the reason why they waited; they waited till sunset.

All that were diseased. "Forthwith began to gather from every street, and from thickly-sown towns and villages around, the strangest assembly. The child led its blind father . . . ; the father came carrying the sick child; men bore the helpless in swimming hammocks; all that had any sick brought them. . . . Fevers, convulsions, asthma, consumption, swelling dropsy, shaking palsy, the deaf, the dumb, the brain-affected, and possessed with devils, that last and worst symptom of despairing misery and dark confusion of the times" (Geikie). Jesus healed them all, one by one, working among them far on into the night; and He is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. Matt. viii. 17 quotes Isa. liii. 4, "Himself took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses."

34. He healed. Luke (iv. 40) tells us that He laid His hands on every one

cast out many devils; and suffered not the devils to speak, because they knew him.

35 And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out,<sup>1</sup> and departed into a solitary place, and there  
36 prayed. And Simon and they that were with him followed  
37 after him. And when they had found him, they said unto him,  
38 All *men* seek for thee.<sup>2</sup> And he said unto them, Let us go  
into<sup>3</sup> the next towns, that I may preach there also: for there-

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<sup>1</sup> In the morning, a great while before day, he rose up and went out

<sup>2</sup> All are seeking thee.

<sup>3</sup> elsewhere into the next towns

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of them, and therefore must have worked among them far on into the night. "This night scene of Jesus, moving about with word and touch of healing among the sick and suffering, the raving and tortured crowd, is one of the most striking in the Gospels" (Farrar).

## II.—FIRST PREACHING JOURNEY IN GALILEE, i. 35-45.

### 1. *Retirement to a desert place*, 35-39: Luke iv. 42-44.

35. **A solitary place.** "A remarkable feature of the Sea of Galilee was that it was closely surrounded with desert solitudes. These 'desert places,' thus close at hand on the tablelands or in the ravines of the eastern and western ranges, gave opportunities of retirement for rest or prayer. . . . The lake in this double aspect is thus the reflex of that union of energy and rest, of active labour and deep devotion, which is the essence of Christianity" (Stanley).

**Prayed.** "Prayer with Him seems to have been not only intimate communion with His Father, but a necessary preparation for His ministry. How much more needful for us!" He had finished a long day of conflict with evil, and prepares Himself by this prayer in solitude for a new mission of healing and doing good.

The Evangelists frequently call attention to the prayers of Jesus—(1) at His baptism (Luke iii. 21); (2) after this night of toil in healing (Mark i. 35); (3) after a day of like severe toil (Luke v. 16); (4) before choosing the apostles (Luke vi. 12); (5) before Peter's great confession (Luke ix. 18); (6) when the people would have made Him king (John vi. 15); (7) at His transfiguration (Luke ix. 28, 29); (8) for Peter (Luke xxii. 32); (9) in Gethsemane (Mark xiv. 35); (10) for His murderers (Luke xxiii. 34); (11) at the moment of death (Luke xxiii. 46). "Those that have most business in public, and of the best kind, must sometimes be alone with God; must retire into solitude, there to converse with God, and keep up communion with Him" (Matt. Henry). For prayer is a holy conference with God.

36. **Followed after him**, literally *tracked Him* or *hunted Him*, to find Him and bring Him back to Capernaum, where the people had again gathered to see Him; Peter characteristically impetuous.

38. **The next towns**, literally *country towns* or *town villages*. Distinction was made by separate name between walled towns, unenclosed villages which had a synagogue, and villages or hamlets which had no synagogue. The word used denotes an unenclosed town or village which had a synagogue or

39 fore came I forth. And he preached in their synagogues throughout all Galilee, and cast out devils.<sup>1</sup>  
 40 And there came<sup>2</sup> a leper to him, beseeching him, and kneeling down to him, and saying unto him, If thou wilt,  
 41 thou canst make me clean. And Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth *his* hand, and touched him, and saith unto  
 42 him, I will; be thou clean. And as soon as he had spoken, immediately the leprosy departed from him, and he was  
 43 cleansed.<sup>3</sup> And he straitly<sup>4</sup> charged him, and forthwith<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> And he went into their synagogues throughout all Galilee, preaching and casting out devils.

<sup>2</sup> cometh

<sup>3</sup> And straightway the leprosy departed from him, and he was made clean.

<sup>4</sup> strictly

<sup>5</sup> straightway

place of social worship. "His blessings were not to be confined to Capernaum. Dalmanutha, Magdala, Bethsaida, Chorazin were all near at hand" (Farrar).

39. **All Galilee.** We do not know where Christ went, save that He began with the village towns nearest Capernaum. The lake was called the Eye of Galilee, and regarded as the centre towards which *all* Galilean life converged, so the circuit need not have been a wide one. The people came to Him from all parts. This was the beginning of Christ's preaching journeys in Galilee.

2. *Cleansing of a leper*, i. 40-45 : Matt. viii. 1-4 ; Luke v. 12-16.

40. **There came a leper.** The only incident recorded during this journey. R. V. *There cometh*.

**A leper**, one infected with the most terrible of all diseases to which the Jews were subject, which was called the "Finger of God," "the stroke," which was believed to be incurable, and which was made the special type of sin, the outward and visible sign of inward spiritual corruption, the sacrament of death. "Leprosy was nothing short of a living death, a corrupting of all the humours, a poisoning of the very springs of life, a dissolution, little by little, of the whole body" (Trench). The disease had various forms. In the worst, ulcers attacked one part of the body after another until the flesh rotted, and parts—the fingers, for example—fell off one after another. The leper bore about him the emblems of death; the rent garments, the head bare, the lips covered. He had to keep far off from others, and to make known his disease by crying out, "Unclean." Notice how Mark describes the scene so that you see it—the leper beseeching, kneeling at a distance, Christ's pity, His touch, His word, the cure. It was pollution to touch a leper (Lev. xiii. 44-46); "but He, Himself remaining undefiled, cleansed him whom He touched; for in Him health overcame sickness, and purity defilement, and life death" (Trench). For accounts of Old Testament lepers, see Ex. iv. 6 ; Num. xii. 10 ; 2 Kings v. 1, 27.

**If thou wilt.** His faith must have been strong; leprosy was an almost incurable disease, and hitherto there had been only one recorded case of a leper cured by miracle, the case of Naaman alluded to by Jesus in His sermon at Nazareth (Luke iv. 27 ; 2 Kings v. 1-14).

43. **Straitly, i.e. strictly**, commanded with sternness and even violence.



44 sent him away; and saith unto him, See thou say nothing to any man: but go thy way, show thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing those things which Moses commanded,  
45 for a testimony unto them. But he went out, and began to publish *it* much, and to blaze abroad the matter, insomuch that Jesus could no more openly enter into the city,<sup>1</sup> but was without in desert places: and they came to him from every quarter.

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<sup>1</sup> a city

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The word used means sometimes the muttered growl of chafed or fretted beasts. The sentence might be translated, *Commanding him with violence, and straightway thrust him forth, and said.* Why this abrupt and stern command? Perhaps because our Lord believed that the Pharisees might have compelled Him to stop His work in order to go through the levitical rites of purification had they known that He had touched the leper. Matthew (viii. 1-4) tells us that Jesus was going first, and the crowd was following; the touch might have been so instantaneous that no one knew of it but Jesus and the leper.

44. **Say nothing.** Why? The law had to be fulfilled (Lev. xiv. 1-32). The crowds were already great, and too much excitement might interfere with work, and the leper's disobedience had in fact this result. "Christ's bodily presence could be but in one place at a time; and those that came to Him from every quarter could not get near Him, but by His spiritual presence He is with His people wherever they are, and comes to them to every quarter. This shows how expedient it was for us that Christ should go away and send the Comforter" (Matt. Henry).

**Those things which Moses commanded.** "Two birds alive and clean, and cedar-wood, and scarlet, and hyssop . . . and on the eighth day two he-lambs without blemish, and one ewe-lamb of the first year without blemish, and three tenth deals of fine flour for a meat-offering, mingled with oil, and one log of oil." (See Lev. xiv. 1-32.)

**For a testimony unto them—**(1) to the priests, that they might assure themselves that the miracle was real; (2) to the people who were following Jesus, to show that Jesus came to fulfil the law.

45. **Insomuch that Jesus.** The indiscreet zeal and self-importance of the leper cured hindered Christ's work. The moment He was recognized, He was at any moment liable to be surrounded by a surging crowd of ignorant, gaping sightseers who hindered His spiritual work, and, like the crowd, on the day of the miracle of the loaves, might have insisted on proclaiming Him king. "Unquestionably the majority of Christians are far more inclined to be silent about their glorious Master than to confess Him . . . but there are good men who have more zeal than discretion, and help the enemy of the truth by unreasonable acts and words" (Ryle).

**Could no more openly enter into the city,** or rather *into a city*; perhaps because it was known that He had touched the leper, and the authorities, the local Sanhedrin, had forbidden Him.

CHAP. II. 1 And again<sup>1</sup> he entered into Capernaum after *some*  
 2 days; and it was noised that he was in the house. And  
 straightway many were gathered together,<sup>2</sup> insomuch that  
 there was no room to receive *them*,<sup>3</sup> no, not so much as  
 3 about the door: and he preached the word unto them. And  
 they come unto him, bringing one sick of the palsy, which  
 4 was borne of four. And when they could not come nigh  
 unto him for the press,<sup>4</sup> they uncovered the roof where he  
 was: and when they had broken *it* up, they let down the bed  
 5 wherein the sick of the palsy lay. When Jesus saw their  
 faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be  
 6 forgiven thee. But there were certain of the scribes sitting

<sup>1</sup> And when he entered  
<sup>3</sup> no longer room for them

<sup>2</sup> And many were gathered together  
<sup>4</sup> crowd

III.—SECOND SOJOURN IN CAPERNAUM, ii. 1–iii. 12. [*Beginning of conflict with the Scribes.*]

I. *The paralytic cured*, 1–12: Matt. ix. 1–8; Luke v. 17–26.

1. **The house**; R. V. margin, *at home*. Probably Christ made Peter's house his home, iii. 19–21; also Matt. viii. 20.

3. **One sick of the palsy**. Luke says, *who was paralyzed*.

4. **They uncovered the roof**; literally, *they dug through*. To understand the scene, it is necessary to remember that the house was most likely a fisherman's cottage, low and flat-roofed. The roofs were made by laying first large beams, and then across them rude joists. On these were laid flat stones or slabs of tile or dried clay, on which was spread earth or gravel rolled hard with a stone roller kept on the roof for the purpose. The men first dug through the earth, as Mark says, and then pulled up the tile slabs, as Luke tells us (v. 19). "Examine one of the houses in this same region, and you will see at once that the thing is natural and easy to be accomplished. The roof is only a few feet high, and by stooping down and holding the corners of the bed (merely a thickly-padded quilt, as in this region), they would let down the sick man without any apparatus of ropes or cords to assist them" (Thomson, *The Land and the Book*, p. 358).

5. **Son, thy sins**; literally, *child*, a tender address (Matt. ix. 2), "Son, be of good cheer." Our Lord saw the man's heart, his misery of soul, that he cared most for spiritual blessing, and that he feared his sins which had brought his disease would prevent the Saviour healing him. It was necessary to speak to his soul before healing his body (Luke vii. 48, and John v. 14). "How many in every age can testify that this palsied man's experience has been their own? . . . Bereavements have proved mercies. . . . Sickneses have led them to the Great Physician of souls" (Ryle). Christ by His visible miracles taught men to understand His invisible miracles. We may bear our friends to Christ now, in the arms of faith and prayer.

6. **Certain of the scribes**. Some from Galilee, but others from Judea and Jerusalem (Luke v. 17), who had come down during our Lord's absence from Capernaum. His death had been already decreed at Jerusalem (John v. 18),

- 7 there, and reasoning in their hearts, Why doth this *man* thus speak blasphemies?<sup>1</sup> who can forgive sins but God only?<sup>2</sup>  
 8 And immediately,<sup>3</sup> when Jesus perceived in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, he said unto them, Why  
 9 reason ye these things in your hearts? Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, *Thy* sins be forgiven thee; or

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<sup>1</sup> Why doth this man speak thus? He blasphemeth.

<sup>2</sup> but One, even God?

<sup>3</sup> straightway

---

and they had been sent with "gall in their ears" to watch His deeds and find matter for a charge of heresy against Him.

Luke tells us, that among the audience were Pharisees and doctors of the law, who had come out of every town of Galilee and Judea and Jerusalem. Jesus had already come into collision with the scribes of Judea, and with the incidents belonging to this miracle of healing the paralytic, His conflict with the scribes of Galilee began. These scribes formed an exceedingly powerful organization in the time of Jesus. The synagogue services gradually developed a class of zealous scholars who made the study of the law their profession. They were called *Sopherim*, scribes or writers, because they had been the first who wrote out exact copies of the law for the synagogue, and in the times of Jesus the name comprehended all those who made it their profession to study the law and teach their fellows its requirements. This study required a man's whole time, and the scribes had become a special learned class, which charged itself with the care of the law, as the priests and Levites took charge of the temple services. Celebrated teachers collected disciples, and taught them in schools; and in Jerusalem, where the scribes abounded, several chambers in the forecourts of the temple were set apart for this purpose. The teacher sat on a raised seat, while the scholars were seated at his feet. The teachers or rabbis, as a rule, learned some handicraft wherewith to support themselves, for they charged no fees for their instructions. Rabbi Hillel was a day-labourer, Rabbi Joshua was a needlemaker, Rabbi Judah a baker, Rabbi Simeon a carpetmaker, and Paul a weaver of goat's hair. These common callings did not interfere with the dignity of the teachers. They were allotted the first seats in the synagogue, the upper places at table were reserved for them, and their dress marked their dignity. Their political importance was great, for it was their instructions which enveloped the whole Jewish life from the cradle to the grave in the precepts of the law, and prevented the nation from amalgamating with Gentiles or submitting to be seduced by the cosmopolitan ideas which the Roman conquerors tried to impart to subject nations. They fulfilled the Mosaic law by multiplying its precepts, and intensifying its minute ceremonial observances, and therefore were instinctively opposed to a Teacher whose aim was to enforce the moral ideas which lay beneath the Mosaic code.

**This man blasphemeth.** The first charge brought by the scribes against Jesus in Galilee, and also the last charge on which He was in the end condemned. We may imagine that when the paralytic did not rise from his bed as soon as Jesus spoke to him, the scribes who were watching the scene said: This man pretends to God's power when he has not got it; he blasphemeth.

**9. Whether is it easier.** More correctly, *Why is it easier to say, Thy sins have been forgiven thee, than to say, Arise and walk?* It was not easier;

- 10 to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house.
- 12 And immediately he arose, took up the bed,<sup>1</sup> and went forth before them all; insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion.
- 13 And he went forth again by the seaside; and all the
- 14 multitude resorted unto him, and he taught them. And as

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<sup>1</sup> And he arose, and straightway took up the bed

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for to say these words as Christ said them, was as impossible as to cure the paralytic. Two deeds are contrasted, *both* impossible to man and alike easy to God. He who had done the one at the pool of Bethesda (John v. 8) to the impotent man, must be God who can do the other. In order to manifest His power to the scribes, our Lord added the words, *Arise and walk*, and really bids them infer that the hidden work of forgiveness had as surely followed the first words as the manifest cure followed the command to rise and walk. He did the one which was within the sight and observation of all, that they might know that He could do and had done the other which they could not see.

10. **The Son of man**, not Son of a man. Our Lord's favourite title for Himself during His sojourn on earth; but never, with three exceptions (Acts vii. 56; Rev. i. 13, xiv. 14), applied to the Eternal Son of God by His disciples themselves.

11. **Arise**. The man with paralyzed limbs stands up instantly, and the crowd which could not make way for him to get in, now make way for him to pass out with his mat rolled up on his shoulders.

**Bed**. The three Evangelists use three different words, which have all been translated by the one English word bed. Matthew uses the common Greek word; Luke employs a more classical term; Mark says *krabbatos* (*grabatus*), and thereby tells us that the bed was merely a pallet or mat—the commonest or poorest kind of bed, a rug which could be spread out in the evening, and rolled up and put aside during the day.

12. **Before them all**. The crowd, before impenetrable, yields to him; and all see that he is cured, for he not only rises, but shows that he has been quite restored by carrying his bed. The miracle was not merely a manifestation, but an attestation of the divine authority of Jesus.

**All amazed, and glorified God**, Luke v. 26. The scribes as well as the others, for in the intensity of feeling there was a recognition of divinity. "The words *they were all amazed* should be, *amazement seized them all*, and *amazement* in the Greek is a remarkable word; it is the original of our *ecstasy*, and is the word rendered *trance* in Acts x. 10, xi. 5, xxii. 17" (Stock).

2. *The call of a Publican to be a disciple*, ii. 13-17: Matt. ix. 9-13; Luke v. 27-32.

13. **He went forth again**, out from the houses, past the custom-house down by the shore of the lake, and the people kept coming to Him, and He kept teaching them.

he passed by, he saw Levi the *son* of Alphæus sitting at the receipt of custom,<sup>1</sup> and said unto him, Follow me. And he  
 15 arose and followed him. And it came to pass, that, as Jesus sat at meat in his house, many publicans and sinners sat also together with<sup>2</sup> Jesus and his disciples: for there were many,  
 16 and they followed him. And when the scribes and Pharisees<sup>3</sup> saw him eat with publicans and sinners, they said unto his

<sup>1</sup> the place of toll, and he saith

<sup>2</sup> that he was sitting at meat in his house, and many publicans and sinners sat down with Jesus

<sup>3</sup> And the scribes and the Pharisees, when they saw

14. *Levi*, or *Matthew*. It was common for Jews to take a new name when they began a new career. Hence the meaning of "the new name" (Rev. ii. 17).

At the receipt of custom, R. V. *at the place of toll*, where the dues were levied on the fish, fruit, and other produce which made the imports and exports at Capernaum, or for the Roman road that ran through the town. The shop of extortion cannot conceal from Jesus a vessel of election. "What sawest Thou, O Saviour, in that publican that might either allure Thine eye or not offend it? what but a hateful trade, an evil eye, a gripping hand, bloody tables, heaps of spoil? Yet Thou saidst, *Follow me*. . . . What canst Thou see in us, O God, but ugly deformities, horrible sins, despicable miseries? Yet it doth please Thy mercy to say unto us both *live* and *follow me*" (Hall).

15. *Publicans and sinners*. *Publican* is a Latin word, meaning, first, the great officers who farmed the Roman revenue, and paid into the *public* treasury the sum agreed upon by contract with the Government. They sublet the tax-gathering to agents, who were also bound by contract to pay a certain amount of money. These agents engaged local officers, the *publicans* of Scripture, to collect the dues. They were chosen from the native population, that they might know the ways of the people, and generally oppressed and fleeced the taxpaying population. They had to pay a definite sum to their superior officers, and whatever more they could squeeze out of the people belonged to themselves. The Turkish Government has inherited this odious fiscal system. These tax-gatherers were hated all over the Roman Empire. Theocritus said that the worst kind of wild beasts were "bears and lions on the mountains, publicans and pettifoggers in the cities." In Palestine they were doubly hated. It was a common saying among the Jews that "vows made to thieves, murderers, and publicans might be broken." "They were nothing less than renegades and traitors, who for filthy lucre's sake had sided with the enemy, and now collected for a profane heathen treasury that tribute which was the evident sign of the subjection of God's people to a Gentile yoke. This scorn and hate found utterance in a thousand ways; no alms might be received from their money-chest; it was not even lawful to change money there; and their testimony was not received in courts of justice" (Trench). It is touching to notice that Matthew alone styles himself "the publican" in the list of apostles. Christ who cured the leper called Matthew to be an apostle. What sinner can fear to kneel before Christ when he sees the Lord sitting among publicans and sinners, and calling Matthew the publican to be an apostle?

- disciples, How is it that he eateth and drinketh with publicans  
 17 and sinners? When Jesus heard *it*, he saith unto them, They  
 that are whole have no need of the physician,<sup>1</sup> but they that  
 are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to  
 repentance.<sup>2</sup>  
 18 And the disciples of John and of the Pharisees used to  
 fast;<sup>3</sup> and they come and say unto him, Why do the disciples  
 of John and of the Pharisees fast, but thy disciples fast not?

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<sup>1</sup> a physician    <sup>2</sup> I came not to call the righteous, but sinners    <sup>3</sup> were fasting

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16. Said unto his disciples. They talked *at* Jesus, not to Him. Revised Version has *certain* scribes of the Pharisees, *i.e.* who belonged to the sect of the Pharisees, and who were intent to pry into our Lord's private life. According to the customs of the East, they could come into the room where the guests were dining, and, according to their traditions or interpretations of the Mosaic law, such association with publicans was lawful, while to eat with them was polluting. "In the room where we were received (in Damietta), besides the divan on which we sat, there were seats all round the walls. Many came in and took their place on those side seats, uninvited and yet unchallenged. They spoke to those at table on business, on the news of the day, and our host spoke freely to them. We afterwards saw this custom at Jerusalem . . . first one and then another stranger opened the door and came in, taking the seats by the wall. They leaned forward and spoke to those at table" (*Scripture Manners and Customs*, p. 185).

17. The physician. Our Lord consorted with sinners to heal them.

The righteous. There is a touch of sarcasm in the words, "You who are so holy that you cannot defile yourselves even to save your fellow-men." "The spiritual Physician finds the sickness of those sinners wholesome, the health of those Pharisees desperate; that wholesome because it calls for the help of the physician; this desperate because it needs not. Every soul is sick; those most that feel it not, those that feel it complain, those that complain have cure. . . . Sin hath made us sick unto death; make Thou us but as sick of our sin, we are as safe as Thou art gracious" (Hall).

3. *Discourse on Fasting*, ii. 18-22: Matt. ix. 14-17; Luke v. 33-39.

18. The disciples of John and the Pharisees used to fast, R. V. *were fasting*. John was in the dungeon at Machærus, and his disciples, sad at the fate of their master, were carrying out his ascetic commands, and one of their set fasts was going on that day. Moses enjoined *one* fast on the great day of Atonement (Lev. xvi. 29); others were added. The Pharisees fasted "twice in the week" (Luke xviii. 12), on Thursday, the day on which Moses reascended Mount Sinai, and on Monday, the day on which he returned. They ask why Christ does not *make* His disciples fast. He contrasts *being made to fast* with voluntary fasting in time of trouble, and implies "that all external acts and exercises should spring naturally out of some pure and deep emotion of the heart." Why should His disciples be *made* to act as if they were sorry when they were really glad? (Hanna).

The correct text *were fasting* implies that Jesus with His disciples were feasting at the house of Matthew or Levi on a fast day. The scribes and the

19 And Jesus said unto them, Can the children<sup>1</sup> of the bride-chamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them? as long as  
20 they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away  
21 from them, and then shall they fast in those days.<sup>2</sup> No man

<sup>1</sup> sons

<sup>2</sup> in that day

Pharisees had objected to the company Jesus kept, the disciples of John objected to His disregard of the old religious customs or forms of religious life in which they had been trained, and which they had presumably found beneficial. Our Lord seizes the occasion to lay down principles which ought to regulate all religious life and its expression, in three short parables, or suggested parables—the bridegroom and his intimate friends, who have the closest fellowship with him; old garments and new cloth; old wine-skins and new fermenting wine. These parables or illustrations were naturally suggested by the feast in which He was then sharing—(1) a wedding feast, (2) a wedding garment, (3) wine.

19. **The children of the bride-chamber**, lit. *the sons of the bride-chamber*, the Jewish name for those wedding guests who accompanied the bridegroom to the house of the bride, who were usually the most intimate companions of the bridegroom. The question put respectfully by the disciples of John, and maliciously by the Pharisees, implied, We acknowledge you to be a religious teacher, able to lead us to truer worship and bring us nearer God; but why act thus in flagrant violation of our old religious life, with its prescriptions of holy living which we have ourselves found so helpful, and which we have received from our fathers? Our Lord gently puts all that aside. He gives rules to His own followers. The first requisite for the religious life He has introduced and is proclaiming is union and communion with Himself, and His maxims are meant only for those who have this fellowship, for the children or sons of the bride-chamber, for His disciples. This solidarity with Jesus, this union and communion with Christ, is the first requisite for religious life, and for all its expression in habits of life and worship. Questions of fasting can only be discussed after that has been clearly understood.

**The bridegroom.** There is perhaps a tender appeal to the disciples of John in the use of the illustrative phrase. Jesus reminds them that the Baptist had spoken of Him as the bridegroom, at whose coming he had rejoiced (John iii. 29). Will they not see in Him what their master saw, and become sons of the bride-chamber, and then they will know naturally and by inward experience the life of communion with Himself in which He is training His disciples?

20. **Taken away.** The word implies a violent death. Our Lord has always the thought of His death before Him. He had hinted it to the Jewish rulers (John ii. 19), to Nicodemus (John iii. 14), and now He says, when that death comes, His disciples will be sad enough, and will show their sorrow without being *made* to do so. The point on which our Lord insists is the natural expression of religious feeling arising from felt fellowship with the Saviour. This cannot be stimulated by means of a set round of external ceremonies, prescribed with no reference whatever to the feelings of the heart produced by communion with Himself. The religious life, however it shows itself, must do so without artificial promptings. Fasting and sorrow

also seweth a piece of new cloth<sup>1</sup> on an old garment: else the new piece that filled it up taketh away from the old, and  
 22 the rent is made worse.<sup>2</sup> And no man putteth new wine into

<sup>1</sup> undressed cloth

<sup>2</sup> else that which should fill it up taketh from it, the new from the old, and a worse rent is made.

were synonymous terms among the Jews; they fasted to show their sorrow. The only real sorrow for the Christian is separation from Christ, and when this is felt sorrow and its natural signs will come. The disciples will be sad enough in those days of darkness after Gethsemane, and no ceremonial law will be needed to compel them to show signs of sorrow. The words of our Lord, of course, go far beyond the trifling question raised by John's disciples, and find an echo in all Christian experience. His people are joyous when they feel His presence; but times do come of despondency and depression when Christ seems taken away, or is felt to be far off, and then sorrow will show itself in signs natural and appropriate.

**21. New cloth, i.e.** which had not been sent to the fuller, and was not teazled nor shrunk. Christ points to the well-dressed Pharisees and then to the clothes of His disciples. Would their robes be the better of patches from yours? The garment, the outward walk and conversation, is not bettered by taking a patch of religious observance and sewing it on; the better way is to take the old garment and transform it thread by thread from within, as if it were a living thing, till old things are passed away. It is not a patch on our old garments, but a new wedding robe that Christ gives.

**Seweth a piece of new cloth on an old garment.** The exact meaning of this short parable is better seen when the different versions in Matthew and Luke are compared with Mark's. Luke says, "And He spake also a parable unto them: No man rendeth a piece from a new garment and putteth it upon an old garment, else he will rend the new, and also the piece from the new will not agree with the old;" and Matthew, "No man putteth a piece of undressed cloth upon an old garment, for that which should fill it up taketh from the garment, and a worse rent is made." The parable speaks about (1) *two* garments, a new and an old; (2) a piece of cloth is cut out of the new to patch the old; and (3) the result is a *treble* mischief. For (a) the new garment, rent to patch the old, is spoiled; (b) the mend on the old is unsuitable, the new patch is glaringly out of place; and (c) the rent in the old is increased by the shrinking of the undressed cloth cut from the new garment. Our Lord is referring to the demands of the Pharisees and the disciples of John that He should command His disciples to obey the precepts of the traditional Judaism, and so to make the gospel a mere addition to the Mosaic economy, on a level with Pharisaism, or no higher at least than the reformation of John the Baptist. They asked Him to declare that Christianity was what the Jews "of the sect of the Pharisees who believed" declared it to be in apostolic and post-apostolic times, Mosaism with a new prophet. Our Lord answers that it is impossible to consider His work in this way. Christianity is the new garment. It will not do to cut patches from it to fill up the rents of Judaism. To do so would be to spoil Christianity, to make painful the contrast between Judaism and Christianity, and to hasten the fall of Judaism itself. Christianity must take the outward forms of expression which are natural to it.



old bottles :<sup>1</sup> else the new wine doth burst the bottles,<sup>1</sup> and the wine is spilled, and the bottles will be marred :<sup>2</sup> but new wine must be put into new bottles.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> old wine-skins

<sup>2</sup> and the wine perisheth, and the skins

<sup>3</sup> fresh wine-skins

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22. **New wine into old bottles.** "The manufacture of these goat-skin bottles is very simple. The animal is skinned from the neck by cutting off the head and legs, and then drawing the skin back without making any slit in the belly. The skins in this state, with the hair on, are then steeped in tannin, and filled with a decoction of bark for a few weeks. . . . They are then sewn up at the neck and the seams pitched" (Tristram). The parable has usually been explained to mean that new bottles stretch, old ones are hard and dry, cannot *give* when the wine ferments and expands. So the expansive joy and the then partially-developed freedom of Christianity could not be safely confined in the old unyielding forms of Judaism, but must have new and more elastic ones of their own.

Canon Farrar, however, says that this mode of explanation is physically untenable. The bottles are of course skins, and the wine is the juice of the grape, which has not yet been fermented, or "must." He maintains, however, that when "must" begins to ferment, it cannot be kept in any bottle new or old, for the force of fermentation and the expansion caused thereby are sufficient to burst the most flexible wine-skin. He thinks that our Lord is not thinking at all of fermented intoxicating wine, but of the "must" which can be kept for years, and is so kept in all wine countries, and which can be kept with perfect safety in *new leathern bottles*. It is unsafe to put it in old bottles which have contained "wine" in the ordinary sense, because in such a case "minute portions of the albuminoid matter would be left adhering to the skin, and receive yeast germs from the air, and keep them in readiness to set up fermentation in the new unfermented contents of the skin." If by any such chance fermentation were accidentally produced, no bottle new or old could stand the pressure. Hence ancient writers on the art of wine-making are careful to say that the unfermented "must" is put into a *new* vessel. To attempt to combine Judaism and Christianity would raise such fermentation as would destroy both. Our Lord forewarns His disciples against those Hebraizing Christians against whom Paul had to fight his lifelong battle, and who are here innocently anticipated by those disciples of John the Baptist.

Our Lord's answer to the questioners is therefore threefold :—

(1) Specially as to fasting, Christianity is essentially a life lived in union and communion with Christ, and a time of felt fellowship with the Master is too joyous to find expression in signs of sorrow.

(2) Christianity is not a sect of Judaism, and its forms of worship must come naturally from that religious fellowship with Christ which is the essential part of it.

(3) No one can be at the same time under the law and under grace ; to combine the systems is fatal.

- 23 And it came to pass, that he went<sup>1</sup> through the corn fields on the sabbath day; and his disciples began, as they went, to  
 24 pluck the ears of corn. And the Pharisees said unto him, Behold, why do they on the sabbath day that which is not

<sup>1</sup> was going

4. *The disciples pluck the ears of corn on the Sabbath, ii. 23-28:*  
 Matt. xii. 1-8; Luke vi. 1-5.

23. **He went**, lit. *He was going along through the corn-fields*. Mark graphically shows us Jesus walking along through the wide stretches of waving corn which covered the plain of Gennesaret and the neighbouring valleys. The roads were only narrow footpaths, and the travellers had all the appearance of wading through the corn.

**On the Sabbath day**. Luke says *on the second Sabbath after the first*, or on the second-first Sabbath; but what that means is very doubtful, and is unimportant, for there can be no question about the time of year. The narrative has been generally held to mean that the corn was wheat, and not barley, for barley cannot be treated by rubbing in the hands as wheat can. The first ripe sheaf of barley was presented at the Passover (April), and the first ripe sheaf of wheat at Pentecost (fifty days after). The Sabbath was some few weeks after the Passover.

**His disciples began as they went**, the translation of a somewhat difficult sentence, which is better translated—*His disciples began to make a way by plucking the corn ears*. The parable of the Sower tells us how pathway, stony ground, thorny thicket, and rich soil intermingled in parts of Galilee, and Christ seems to have been in a place where the path went over the good ground and had been sown over, the farmer leaving it to the wayfarers to renew the path his grain had obliterated, by walking in it. The disciples began to walk along this path hidden by the grain, *making a way*; they were hungry, and had been long fasting, and as they went they plucked and ate those ears of corn which grew on the old pathway.

**To pluck the ears of corn**. To pluck ears of corn was allowed by custom and by the law (Deut. xxiii. 25: "When thou comest into the standing corn of thy neighbour, then thou mayest pluck the ears with thine hand; but thou shalt not move a sickle unto thy neighbour's standing corn"), but by rabbinical tradition "to pluck ears" was to *reap*, and to rub ears in the hand was to *thresh*, and these actions were therefore forbidden on the Sabbath. So it was lawful to wear shoes without nails, but unlawful to have nails, because nails were a "burden," and burdens could not be carried on the Sabbath. "The vitality of these artificial notions among the Jews is extraordinary. Abarbanel relates that when in 1492 the Jews were expelled from Spain, and were forbidden to enter the city of Fez lest they should cause a famine, they lived on grass; yet even in this state religiously avoided the violation of their Sabbath by plucking the grass with their hands. To avoid this they took the much more laborious method of grovelling on their knees, and cropping it with their teeth." Matthew, as well as Mark, note that the Pharisees spoke to Jesus as soon as the disciples *began* to pluck. This seems to imply that they were spies on the watch to find matter of accusation against the great Teacher.

25 lawful? And he said unto them, Have ye never read what David did, when he had need, and was an hungered, he, and  
26 they that were with him? How he went into the house of God in the days of Abiathar the high priest, and did eat the shewbread, which is not lawful to eat but for the priests, and  
27 gave also to them which were with him? And he said unto them, The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the  
28 sabbath: therefore<sup>1</sup> the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath.

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<sup>1</sup> so that

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25. When he was in need and was an hungered. Notice how Jesus lays stress on the necessity of David's deed; all laws of positive institution must be accommodated to circumstances from their very nature. This distinguishes them from permanent moral obligations.

26. The house of God, *i.e.* the tabernacle when it was in Nob, an old priestly town (1 Sam. xxii. 19), near Jerusalem (Isa. x. 32).

In the days of Abiathar the high priest. Ahimelech, the father of Abiathar, was high priest, and actually gave the bread to David (1 Sam. xxi. 1-6). Various explanations of the difficulty have been given, none very satisfactory. The one name has got into the text somehow for the other. The old Persian version has Ahimelech.

The shewbread. The twelve cakes of fine unleavened flour, sprinkled with frankincense, and set on a golden table, called also the "continual bread" (Num. iv. 7), reserved for the priests. "It shall be Aaron's and his sons'." Our Lord quotes a *fact*, a deed of David's, their favourite hero, to show that mercy is better than sacrifice. If hunger made David, and them that were with him, blameless in eating the consecrated shewbread, may not the same plea of necessity be urged to justify the disciples, although they had transgressed a rabbinical tradition?

27. The Sabbath was made for man. "A great principle which must regulate the whole Sabbath question, and settles both the permanent necessity of the Sabbath for the temporal and eternal welfare of man, and the true Christian freedom in its observance" (Schaff). The perverse ingenuity of the scribes in multiplying positive rules, to the neglect of ethical principles, was nowhere more exercised than in defining varieties of unlawful work on the Sabbath. The law said that the Jews were *to do no manner of work* on the Sabbath day. The scribes, after their usual fashion, set about defining manners of work, and in due time the oral law had set down thirty-nine manners of work—sowing, ploughing, reaping, threshing, baking, washing, cleaning fruit, making knots, cutting wood, writing, and obliterating writing, and so on. From these thirty-nine prohibitions, the ingenuity of later scribes deduced an immense number of derivative rules; plucking ears of corn, for example, was a kind of reaping. The Rabbis contemplating this vast mass of commands all coming from the single precept of the Mosaic law, compared it, with professional delight, to a "mountain suspended by a hair." The mountain pressed heavily on the people, and the Sabbath rest given in blessing had become a terrible injury—the word of God had become of none effect by their tradition.

28. The Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath; better, *is Lord even of the*

CHAP. III. 1 And he entered again into the synagogue; and  
 2 there was a man there which had a withered hand. And  
 they watched him, whether he would heal him on the sabbath  
 3 day; that they might accuse him. And he saith unto the  
 4 man which had the withered hand,<sup>1</sup> Stand forth. And he

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<sup>1</sup> his hand withered

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*Sabbath.* The scribes maintained that the regulations about the Sabbath were the most important part of the whole law, and that their observance formed the essential contents of religion. Thus Jesus sets Himself above Mosaism, and announces His right to interpret, to fulfil, and to set aside. He declares that the Sabbath is to be used as a gift of God given to further the spiritual and temporal good of man; and in turn we are bound to observe the Sabbath in such a way that our temporal and spiritual welfare is thereby furthered. "The Son of man is Lord of the Sabbath, because He is the divine rest and the divine celebration; He is both the principle and the object of the Sabbath; He rests in God, and God in Him; He is the mediator of proper Sabbath observance, and the interpreter of the Sabbath law" (Lange). Our Lord was careful to show His lordship over the Sabbath by selecting that day over and over again for a time to work miracles; and two cures which He wrought at Jerusalem on the Sabbath, were carefully made public (John v. 8, ix. 7). He was evidently anxious, disregarding the popular orthodoxy of the day, to bring out the mercy of God in the gift of the Sabbath, to show that the end for which the Sabbath was ordained was that it might bless man. "Jesus chose to do many of His miracles on the Sabbath, that He might do the work of abrogation and institution both at once" (Jeremy Taylor).

5. *The man with the withered hand*, iii. 1-6: Matt. xii. 9-14;  
 Luke vi. 6-11.

1. **A withered hand.** His "right hand," Luke says; and an old tradition recorded in the Gospel of the Ebionites adds, that he was a stonemason by trade, and that he asked Jesus to heal him and relieve him from having to beg his bread. He had come on the Sabbath day to be healed, and this act was itself esteemed a sin by some of the stricter scribes of the school of Shammai (Luke xiii. 14). His hand had been injured, and the effect was to wither or dry up the arm. Such cases are incurable.

2. **They watched him.** The scribes and Pharisees both of Galilee and Jerusalem were tracking Him like bloodhounds. His disregard of the "traditions," whereby they had made the "Sabbath law" of none effect, seemed best fitted to form matter of legal accusation against Him, so they kept "watching Him."

They came to the synagogue not to worship, but to watch Him; and while so particular about Jesus keeping the Fourth Commandment, they broke it themselves by their malice and treachery.

3. **Stand forth.** Matthew tells us that the Pharisees first asked Him, Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath days? A crisis had come, and our Lord met it at once. He asked the man to stand forth, and with the eyes of all the people on Him, He points to the withered hand, and asks His counter question—

saith unto them, Is it lawful to do good on the sabbath days, or to do evil?<sup>1</sup> to save life, or to kill? But they held their  
 5 peace. And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness<sup>2</sup> of their hearts, he saith unto the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched  
 6 it out: and his hand was restored whole as the other. And the Pharisees went forth, and straightway took counsel with the Herodians against him, how they might destroy him.

<sup>1</sup> harm<sup>2</sup> at the hardening

4. **Is it lawful to do good, etc.** Is it better to have the desire to heal, as I have to this man, or the desire to kill, as you have towards me? He was intending to do good; they meant, and the people knew that they meant, to do Him as much harm as they could. One of their best maxims was, "He who neglects to preserve life when it is in his power is a murderer." Christ appeals to their own better teaching. They are silent. Mark alone mentions the silence of the Pharisees, and the anger of Jesus.

5. **With anger . . . being grieved.** Looked slowly round in each Pharisee's face with divine anger, and yet with compassion; for, as Beza remarks, "By this word *anger* and *grieved*, is signified that Christ was offended at their wickedness; yet so that He also pitied their misery."

**For the hardness, lit. at the hardening of their hearts.** They had set themselves to prove Christ guilty at all hazards, and the result was a gradual hardening of the heart, so that in the midst of wonders of grace no impression could be made on them. There is no more sorrowful sight than the gradual hardening of the heart and searing of the conscience.

**Stretch forth thine hand.** No word of healing, Christ's power could work without breaking even the rabbinical Sabbath regulations.

**Restored whole as the other.** This miracle was remarkable for several reasons:—(a) It was wrought in direct challenge to the scribes to defend, on divine principles, some of their burdensome sabbatical regulations—Jesus publicly separated Himself from the scribes; (b) it was wrought without the employment of any external means either of word or touch—the disease was not rebuked, nor was the hand touched; (c) it was one of seven miracles wrought, the most of them evidently on purpose, on the Sabbath. The seven are—(1) the cripple at the pool of Bethesda (John v. 1-16); (2) the demoniac in the synagogue at Capernaum (Mark i. 21-28); (3) Peter's wife's mother (Mark i. 29-31); (4) this man with the withered hand (Mark iii. 1-6); (5) the blind man at Siloam (John ix. 1-41); (6) the paralytic woman (Luke xiii. 11-17); (7) the man with the dropsy (Luke xiv. 1-6).

6. **Went forth, and straightway.** "All things in connection with Jesus were now moving on in hot haste. The whole district was in a whirl of commotion." The Pharisees held formal consultation, and resolved, under the spell of the movement, to make allies of the Herodians, the court party, usually their political enemies, in order to get rid of Jesus. Herod had imprisoned John, might he not seize Jesus also?

**The Herodians** were the followers of the Herod family, who looked for place and wealth by the restoration of a kingdom in Israel after the fashion of that ruled over by Herod the Great. When the power of their great chief

7 But Jesus withdrew himself with his disciples to the sea:<sup>1</sup>  
 and a great multitude from Galilee followed him, and from  
 8 Judea, and from Jerusalem, and from Idumæa, and *from*  
 beyond Jordan; and they about Tyre and Sidon, a great  
 multitude, when they had heard what great things he did,  
 9 came unto him. And he spake to his disciples, that a small  
 ship<sup>2</sup> should wait on him because of the multitude, lest they  
 10 should throng him: for he had healed many; insomuch that  
 they pressed upon him for to touch him, as many as had

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<sup>1</sup> And Jesus with his disciples withdrew to the sea

<sup>2</sup> boat

vanished, and his kingdom was divided, their faith in the star of the house survived, and, like the Bonapartists in France, they remained a united political party in Palestine. No party in Palestine could be wholly political, and the Herodians, like the Pharisees, were obliged to assume the form of a school. Their ideal future was the kingdom restored again to Israel under a Herod; their means to bring this about, the old policy of Herod the Great, to keep well with Rome, and yet flatter the religious feelings of the Jewish people. They were therefore at the opposite pole of party feeling from the Pharisees. They looked for an Idumean prince, they truckled to Rome, they were as cosmopolitan as they dared to be. When our Lord began His ministry, the fortunes of the party were at a low ebb. Their leader was Herod Antipas, a man whose character was mainly made up of low astuteness and timidly cunning covetousness. Under such a leader, the party could only keep together and secure the future by joining with any other sect in Palestine to crush the early symptoms of a new power. They now combined with the Pharisees against Jesus.

6. *Open-air preaching*, iii. 7-12: Luke vi. 17-19.

7. Withdrew himself from the synagogue to the lake-side, perhaps because of the opposition of the Judean Pharisees, who had influence with the synagogue authorities, which were like our kirk-sessions.

A great multitude. "Observe the wide area from which the multitudes were now gathered together: the region (1) of Tyre and Sidon and Galilee in the north of Palestine; (2) of Judea and Jerusalem in the centre; (3) of Perea 'beyond the Jordan' on the east; (4) of Idumea, Herod's native country, in the south." See Map, p. 45.

If scribes came from Jerusalem to persecute, hearers came also. They about Tyre and Sidon who came, doubtless carried back the news of Jesus' wonderful deeds, and enabled the Syrophœnician woman to persevere in asking the help of the Saviour when He visited her country. Idumea, the old home of the Herods, is only mentioned in the New Testament in this text. It was then ruled by Aretas.

9. A small ship or boat. Jesus had been driven from the synagogue by the Pharisees, but like His followers Wycliffe and Wesley in like circumstances, He began to preach in the open-air to the crowds that gathered. The Sea of Galilee was full of fish, and its surface was crowded with boats. Jesus preached to the crowds on the shore from a small boat. Where Christ is, there are the means of grace; where His people meet Him, there can public worship be joined in.

10 For he healed many. The reason why they thronged after Him.

11 plagues.<sup>1</sup> And unclean spirits, when they saw him, fell  
down before him, and cried, saying, Thou art the Son of  
12 God. And he straitly charged them that they should not  
make him known.

13 And he goeth up into a mountain, and calleth *unto him*  
14 whom he would: and they came unto him. And he ordained<sup>2</sup>  
twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send

<sup>1</sup> insomuch that as many as had plagues pressed upon him to touch him

<sup>2</sup> appointed

**Plagues**, diseases. The word means either a scourge or a disease. In modern usages it is "a title given to great pestilences, because the universal consciousness of man, which is never at fault, believed and confessed that they were strokes or blows inflicted by God on a rebellious and guilty world."

IV.—SECOND PREACHING JOURNEY, iii. 13–19: Matt. x. 1–8;  
Luke vi. 12–16.

*The calling of the Twelve Apostles.*

13. And he goeth. We have now reached an important turning-point in the gospel history. (1) The fame of the Saviour had spread abroad in every direction throughout the land, and the current of popular feeling had set strongly in His favour. But (2) the animosity of the ruling powers had deepened in intensity alike in Judea and Galilee, and an active correspondence was going on between the scribes and Pharisees in both districts respecting Him. Meanwhile (3) He Himself had seemed to stand almost alone. A few indeed had gathered round Him as His disciples, but as yet they did not present the appearance of a regular organized body, nor had they received a distinct commission to spread His doctrines. Such a body was now to be formed. Such a commission was now to be given (Maclear). Accordingly Jesus retired to the high land near Capernaum, and spent the whole night in prayer (Luke vi. 12). Then at the dawn of the following day, He calleth unto him whom he would of the disciples, and solemnly set apart twelve.

14. Twelve. Luke adds, *whom He also named apostles* (vi. 13). The *calling* of the apostles, which is described here by Mark and by Luke vi. 12–16, is to be distinguished from their first *mission*, recorded by Luke ix. 1–6, and by Matt. x. 1–8. Both occurred at crises in our Lord's life, the *calling* shortly after the conspiracy against Him by the Pharisees and the Herodians, and His consequent expulsion from the synagogues; the *mission* just before Christ's first journey of flight after hearing of the murder of John the Baptist by Herod Antipas. A comparison of the accounts in Mark and Luke enables us to see that Jesus on the previous evening retired to the high land behind Capernaum, where, doubtless apart from the crowd of disciples, our Lord spent the night in prayer (Luke vi. 12). When the morning came He summoned His disciples around Him, and chose the Twelve to be His special messengers or missionaries. Then He went down to some place on more level ground (Luke vi. 17), and preached the Sermon on the Mount to the Twelve, to the disciples, and also to a great concourse of people who had come to hear and see Him.

The more intimate followers of Jesus had hitherto been called *disciples* or *scholars*; from the multitude of disciples our Lord selected *twelve*, who, con-

15 them forth to preach, and to have power to heal sicknesses, tinning disciples, were to be something else besides. They were to be men *sent forth* to carry on Christ's work after His time was fulfilled.

The *calling* of these twelve men was such an important event in the gospel history that it is well to notice—

(1) The *title* or *designation* given them in Matthew and Luke. Apostles, which is used either as an adjective, *delegated* or *sent forth*, or as a noun, *delegate*, *ambassador*, or *missionary*. The Greek word has various meanings :—

- (a) In classical Greek, it is almost always used of a *naval expedition*, or a *fleet despatched on foreign service*.
- (b) In the Septuagint the word occurs once only, and there with the meaning of *messenger commissioned by God*, "I am a messenger unto thee of heavy tidings" (1 Kings xiv. 6).
- (c) In the time of our Lord the word was in common use among the Jews to designate those who were sent on a special mission to a foreign or a provincial synagogue about the collection of the temple tribute or other important matter; it was also the title of that official in the synagogue who was the corresponding secretary.
- (d) Hence our Lord took over a term well known among the Jews in His own day and consecrated it to His service; the Twelve were selected or winnowed from the disciples to be messengers or envoys entrusted with a responsible mission.

It should be added, however, that the name apostle is not always confined to the official Twelve. Barnabas is called an apostle (Acts xiv. 14), so are certain companions of Paul, whom he calls "our brethren . . . the apostles of the churches" (2 Cor. viii. 23), and also Epaphroditus (Phil. ii. 25), and Andronicus and Junias (Rom. xvi. 7).

(2) *Their functions and qualifications*. Mark says that the apostles were men who (a) were specially chosen by Jesus, (b) were to be with Jesus, (c) were to be sent forth by Jesus, and (d) were to have power given them to heal sicknesses and cast out devils. The first two of these qualifications were insisted on by Peter when the disciples met to choose a successor to Judas (Acts i. 15-26).

(3) *Their number and the lists given*. The apostles were *twelve* in number, doubtless with reference to the twelve tribes of Israel (Matt. xix. 28; Rev. xxi. 12-14). Four separate lists of the apostles are given in the New Testament :—

Matthew x. 2-4.	Mark iii. 16-19.	Luke vi. 14-16.	Acts i. 13.
Simon.	Simon.	Simon.	Peter.
Andrew.	James.	Andrew.	James.
James.	John.	James.	John.
John.	Andrew.	John.	Andrew.
Philip.	Philip.	Philip.	Philip.
Bartholomew.	Bartholomew.	Bartholomew.	Thomas.
Thomas.	Matthew.	Matthew.	Bartholomew.
Matthew.	Thomas.	Thomas.	Matthew.
James of Alphæus.	James of Alphæus.	James of Alphæus.	James of Alphæus.
Lebbæus.	Thaddæus.	Simon Zelotes.	Simon Zelotes.
Simon the Canan-æan.	Simon the Canan-æan.	Jude of James.	Jude of James.
Judas Iscariot.	Judas Iscariot.	Judas Iscariot.	



16 and to cast out devils:<sup>1</sup> and Simon he surnamed Peter;

<sup>1</sup> and to have authority to cast out devils

In examining these lists, it is important to note :—

- (a) That the twelve names fall into three divisions of four, the first name in each division being invariably the name in all the lists. Simon heads the first division, Philip the second, and James of Alphæus the third. Simon is the first name in each list, and Judas Iscariot the last. These divisions show us that “the apostolic college was formed of three concentric circles, each less closely intimate with Jesus than the last.” This distinction of an innermost circle among the apostles, revealed in the lists, is borne out by the gospel history. The first four apostles, especially the first three, Peter, James, and John, are prominent throughout; while of the last four no incident is recorded of James of Alphæus and Simon Zelotes; his perplexed question (John xiv. 22) is the only reference to Jude of James; and Judas Iscariot is the traitor.
- (b) All the apostles, except Judas Iscariot, who belonged probably to the town of Kerieth in Judea, were Galileans, and the first five came from the village of Bethsaida.
- (c) None of the lists exactly coincide, and one apostle is designated by at least three names—Jude of James, who has the two surnames Lebbæus and Thaddæus or Theudas; none of the lists mention Nathanael (John xxi. 2), who has been identified with Bartholomew.
- (d) It has been conjectured that half of the apostles were relations of Jesus, and that many were near relations of each other; that James and John were brothers, and were first cousins of our Lord; Thomas, Matthew, and James of Alphæus were brothers, and were first cousins of our Lord; Jude of James was probably son of James of Alphæus, and therefore nephew to Thomas and Matthew, and first cousin of our Lord once removed; Peter and Andrew were brothers. For these relationships, many of which are inconsistent with each other, see notes on verses 16–19.
- (4) *Their training.* They were trained gradually for their work. Some of them had been called more than once in a special fashion to follow Jesus. Andrew had been a disciple of John the Baptist, had heard his first master’s witness for Jesus, and had followed Him; the earliest call of Simon Peter, of Philip and of Nathanael, also belonged to the first weeks of our Lord’s public ministry. Peter and Andrew, James and John, had also been called from their occupation as fishers on the shores of the Sea of Galilee (see note on i. 17). From the time of their call onwards the Twelve were always with Jesus; they heard Him preach, and saw Him work His miracles, and thus manifest forth His glory. They were taught how to work miracles themselves by getting that faith on Him which grew stronger as they lived in His presence, knew Him, and learned His love and power. They were sent short preaching journeys, and made reports to their Master. After our Lord’s resurrection He continually manifested Himself to them to teach them. At and after Pentecost they received special gifts from the Holy Spirit to fit them to be the first missionaries and the Twelve Pillars of the Church of Christ.

16. Simon or Simeon (John xxi. 16; Acts xv. 14), who was surnamed Peter

17 and James the *son* of Zebedee, and John the brother of James; and he surnamed them Boanerges, which is, The

(John i. 42), stands first on all the four lists. He belonged originally to Bethsaida (John i. 44), followed the calling of his father, John or Jonah (John i. 42, R. V.), who was a fisherman, and afterwards lived at Capernaum (Mark i. 16). He was brought to Jesus first by his brother Andrew in such a way as to make it evident that he was one who anxiously awaited the advent of the Messiah (John i. 41). He was called a second time while fishing on the Sea of Galilee (Mark i. 16, 17; Matt. iv. 18-20; Luke v. 1-11). He was the most prominent of the apostles during our Lord's lifetime, and continually appears so in the gospel history: when Christ is absent, it is Peter that sets off to *find Him* (Mark i. 36); he speaks in the name of the Twelve (Matt. xix. 27; Luke xii. 41); he answers when all are addressed (Matt. xvi. 16; Mark viii. 29); he was the first to make public confession of the Divine Messiahship of Jesus (Mark viii. 27-30); our Lord speaks to him as the chief apostle (Matt. xvi. 18; Luke xxii. 32); strangers recognised him to be the representative of the apostolic community (Matt. xvii. 24); during the planting of the Church he assumed a still more prominent position (Acts i. 15, ii. 14, iv. 8, v. 29), and was recognised in the Apostolic and post-Apostolic Church as *the* apostle of the circumcision, whose work was greater than that of any other missionary save Paul. This pre-eminence was due to natural character and abilities, to his wonderful combination of adoration and activity: there is no trace of official lordship. Simon himself took official rank simply as an apostle and presbyter (1 Pet. i. 1, v. 1). His apostolic name was Peter,—the *Rock-man*. He was brother to Andrew (John i. 40).

17. James the son of Zebedee, also belonging to Bethsaida (this is inferred from John i. 44, and the fact that John and James were partners with Simon and Andrew), was one of the three specially favoured apostles who were witnesses of the Transfiguration (Mark ix. 2), of the raising of the daughter of Jairus (v. 37), and of other manifestations of the glory of Jesus. He appears to have been older than John, and in the *earlier* narrative receives a greater prominence. He was the first of the Twelve to receive the crown of martyrdom, and is the only apostle whose death is recorded in the New Testament. His mother was Salome, who was most probably the sister of the Virgin (compare Matt. xxvii. 56, Mark xv. 40, with John xix. 25), and therefore James and John his brother were *first cousins of our Lord*.

John the brother of James, the young son of Zebedee and Salome, but destined to take higher place than his elder brother, the author of the Gospel and of the Epistles that bear his name, and of the book of Revelation, who never names himself, but calls himself *the other disciple* (John xviii. 15, xx. 2, 3), *the disciple whom Jesus loved* (John xiii. 23, xix. 26), was perhaps the most intimate companion of Jesus (John xix. 26, 27, xiii. 23). He had been a disciple of John the Baptist; was one of the two who first followed Jesus (i. 35-40). It has been conjectured that as his Gospel tells most about the early Judean ministry, and as he had acquaintances among the priestly aristocracy of Jerusalem, John had spent most of his time in that part of the country. Our Lord surnamed the two brothers, John and James, **Boanerges**, or sons of Thunder, from the fiery, enthusiastic zeal they showed (Mark ix. 38, x. 37; Luke ix. 54). John survived all his fellow-apostles (Acts xii. 25; John xxi. 22).

18 sons of thunder : and Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the *son* of Alphæus,

**18. Andrew**, a native of Bethsaida, the brother of Simon Peter, whom he first brought to Jesus, had been a disciple of John the Baptist, and had heard his witness for Christ (John i. 35-42). He was the first disciple, and was with Jesus in Olivet (Mark xiii. 3). He is not very prominent, but seems to have been of a quiet and practical turn of mind, doing small things which had to be done (John vi. 8, xii. 22).

**Philip**, a native of Bethsaida, one of the earliest disciples, and the first to whom Jesus said, *Follow me* (John i. 42, 43). The references to him are not very numerous :—At the feeding of the 5000 (John vi. 5-9) ; when the Greeks wished to see the Lord (John xii. 20-22) ; when he asked to be shown the Father (John xiv. 8).

**Bartholomew**, generally supposed to be the same as Nathanael for these reasons :—John always couples Nathanael with Philip, just as Bartholomew is in the lists of apostles in the Gospels ; and while the Synoptists never mention Nathanael, John never mentions Bartholomew, but inserts Nathanael instead. He belonged to Cana of Galilee (John xxi. 2) ; was of guileless nature (John i. 47) ; and was one of the seven who saw Jesus by the lake of Genesareth after His resurrection (John xxi. 2).

**Matthew**, or *Levi*, the son of Alphæus or Clopas, had been a tax-gatherer (Mark ii. 14, 15, see notes), and was the author of the Gospel bearing his name. Was his father the father also of James ? The conjecture is commonly adopted.

**Thomas**, called also Didymus (*i.e.* Twin), noted for his devotion to Jesus (John xi. 16), for his question about *the way* (John xiv. 5), for his doubt about the resurrection (John xx. 25), and for his interviews with the risen Christ (xx. 26, xxi. 2). Tradition says that Thomas was twin-brother to James the son of Alphæus, and brother also to Matthew.

**James of Alphæus**, or *Clopas*, had for his mother Mary (Mark xv. 40), one of the holy women who stood round the cross, and to whom Jesus appeared after His resurrection (Mark xvi. 1). It has been conjectured that Mary, who was the mother of James, was the sister of the Virgin (comp. John xix. 25 with Matt. xxvii. 56, Mark xv. 40) ; it is also conjectured that Alphæus the father of Matthew, was the same as Alphæus the father of James, and the husband of Mary. Taking these *conjectures* with the legend that Thomas was the brother of James,—Matthew, Thomas, and James were brothers, the nephews of the Virgin, and first cousins to our Lord. It should be noticed, however, that if Mary the mother of James was sister to the Virgin, then Salome was not ; for the phrase on which the relationship is founded, “his mother’s sister,” cannot apply to Mary *and* Salome, but to one or other. If James and John were our Lord’s first cousins, Matthew, Thomas, and James were not.

**Thaddæus**, also called Lebbaeus (Matt. x. 3), whose real name was Judas, probably a son of James (the “Jude of James,” Luke vi. 16 ; Acts i. 13). The only incident recorded of Judas, is his question about Christ’s manifestation of Himself to His people (John xiv. 22). It is *conjectured* that James the father of Judas was James the son of Alphæus. This added to previous conjecture makes Judas the nephew of Thomas and Matthew, and our Lord’s first cousin once removed.

**Simon the Canaanite**, or *Cananean*, Simon Zelotes, or the Zealot (Luke

- 19 and Thaddæus, and Simon the Canaanite,<sup>1</sup> and Judas Iscariot, which also betrayed him: and they went into an house.  
20 And the multitude cometh together again, so that they

<sup>1</sup> Cananæan

vi. 15; Acts i. 13), had belonged to the sect of the Zealots, a fierce secret society pledged to exterminate the Romans and traitors who joined them, and which included men of all temperaments, from the heroic leaders of Galilean revolts to the desperate sicarii, or dagger-men, who sought to accomplish their object by the secret assassination of Romans and their supporters. The apostolic company included a tax-gatherer on the one hand, and a member of a patriotic assassination league on the other.

19. Judas Iscariot, *i.e.* Judas the man of Kerioth, *Ish-Kerioth*, a native of Kerioth, a little village in the tribe of Judah (Josh. xv. 25; Jer. xlviii. 24); the traitor, and the only disciple not a Galilean.

It should be noticed that our Lord's brethren were still hostile to Him, and that therefore none are among the Twelve; and care should be taken to distinguish between persons with the same name. In the circle which formed the early Apostolic Church there were at least three, and perhaps four, who bore the name James:—(1) the son of Zebedee, (2) the brother of our Lord, (3) the son of Alphæus, and (4) the father of Jude, if distinct from (3).

Three Judes should also be distinguished—(1) the brother of our Lord, (2) the Apostle Jude of James, (3) Judas Iscariot.

*Between the first and second clause of ver. 19 of this chapter there intervenes an interval of several weeks:—*

(1) *Our Lord's return to Capernaum and His third sojourn there, during which He healed the Centurion's servant* (Matt. viii. 5-13; Luke vii. 1-10).

(2) *The third preaching journey through Galilee, during which our Lord*

(a) *Went to Nain, where He healed the widow's son* (Luke vii. 11-17).

(b) *Received a message from John the Baptist* (Matt. xi. 2-30; Luke vii. 18-35).

(c) *Dined with Simon the Pharisee, and was anointed by a woman* (Luke vii. 36-50).

(d) *Continued His circuit in Galilee, and returned to Capernaum* (Luke viii. 1-3).

#### V.—FOURTH SOJOURN IN CAPERNAUM, iii. 19-35.

##### I. *Opposition of His relatives. He is mad*, iii. 20-21.

19. And they entered into a house. This begins a new paragraph. Robert Stephens, who first divided the Bible into verses, made these words begin a verse, as they ought to do. Unfortunately Beza added them to verse 19. Henry Stephens followed his example, and unhappily set a fashion which has been adhered to by the translators of our version. These words really begin the account of our Lord's fourth sojourn in Capernaum, which was several weeks after His selection of the apostles.

20. A crowd cometh together again. The excitement recorded in verses 7, 8, had not died out during our Lord's absence. As soon as He returned, the crowds came thronging, eager to see and hear, so that, as Mark says with his usual graphic touch, our Lord and His disciples could not so much as eat

21 could not so much as eat bread. And when his friends heard  
 of it, they went out to lay hold on him: for they said, He  
 22 is beside himself. And the scribes which came down from  
 Jerusalem said, He hath Beelzebub, and by the prince of the  
 23 devils casteth he out devils. And he called them *unto him*,  
 and said unto them in parables, How can Satan cast out  
 24 Satan? And if a kingdom be divided against itself, that  
 25 kingdom cannot stand. And if a house be divided against  
 26 itself, that house cannot stand.<sup>1</sup> And if Satan rise up against  
 himself, and be divided,<sup>2</sup> he cannot stand, but hath an end.

<sup>1</sup> will not be able to stand

<sup>2</sup> hath risen up against himself, and is divided

bread. What a picture of ceaseless energy Mark gives us—surging crowds, blocked streets, crowded doorways, and no leisure to sleep or to eat!

21. **His friends.** His relatives, including "His mother and His brethren," who here go out to Him, and (ver. 31) go to the place where multitudes crowd round Him.

**Beside himself**, in a state of religious excitement which required watchful care. The phrase is used in a good sense (2 Cor. v. 13) or in a bad (Acts xxvi. 24). Many commentators are scandalized at Mark's simple statement, and wish to explain the words away. They seem to think that to say that Jesus' kinsfolk wished to lay hands on Him, because they thought Him insane, must prove a stumbling-block in the way of weak believers, and must afford triumph to adversaries. But there is no occasion for their prudential timidity. The prophets were thought to be *mad fellows* (2 Kings ix. 11), and so have many followers of Jesus since, whose overflowing love and sympathy for those for whom Christ died have prompted them to give their lives for their fallen brethren at home and abroad.

2. *Can Satan cast out Satan?* 22-30: Matt. xii. 22-37; Luke xi. 14-26.

22. **The scribes** took advantage of the fears of His friends, and told the people that His being beside Himself was a case of demoniac possession. *Beelzebub*, the heathen deity whom the Jews made king of "evil spirits." The Evangelist wrote Beelzebub or Baalzebub, which was an intentional caricature of Baalzebub. Baalzebub meant *Fly-God*, and the Jews said Baalzebub, making it *Filth-God*, and applied the term to Satan.

It was the scribes who came down from Jerusalem who made these insinuations. We can see them going among the crowd artfully repeating the fears of Jesus' friends about His sanity, and suggesting in whispers that His power was demoniac. The rude straightforward Galileans could scarcely have invented such an unscrupulous plausible lie; it had the mark of Jerusalem upon it, and came from men who were accustomed to see craft triumphant in the person of the wily Annas.

23. **He called them unto him.** They had spoken in insinuations in the ears of the crowd. Jesus again brought things to a crisis, and challenged them to meet Him.

**Parables.** These parables are short, pithy metaphors.

26. **Satan cast out Satan.** Our Lord speaks of Satan here as a personality, a kingdom, a household, a power. If he works against himself, he cannot stand.

- 27 No man can enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he will first bind the strong man; and then he  
 28 will spoil his house. Verily I say unto you, All sins<sup>1</sup> shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies<sup>2</sup> wherewith  
 29 soever they shall blaspheme: but he that shall<sup>3</sup> blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in  
 30 danger of eternal damnation:<sup>4</sup> because they said, He hath an unclean spirit.  
 31 There came then<sup>5</sup> his brethren and his mother, and, stand-  
 32 ing without, sent unto him, calling him. And the multitude sat about him, and they said unto him, Behold, thy mother

<sup>1</sup> all their sins<sup>2</sup> and their blasphemies<sup>3</sup> but whosoever shall<sup>4</sup> but is guilty of an eternal sin<sup>5</sup> And there came

27. No man . . . strong man. Calvin maintains that the "strong man" represents Satan, and the "man" who binds him is Christ. The strong man's house is this world of sin which Christ entered.

29. Shall blaspheme. "The sin against which these words are a terrible but merciful warning, is not so much an *act* as a *state* of sin, on the part of one who, in defiance of light and of *set purpose*, rejects, and not only rejects but *perseveres* in rejecting the warnings of conscience and the grace of the Holy Spirit" (Maclear). Our Lord intimates that His slanderers were on the brink of that sin from which there was no redemption. There is a limit to divine mercy and forgiveness. "There is such a thing as a sin which is never forgiven. But those who are troubled about it are most unlikely to have committed it" (Ryle).

Of eternal damnation; better, *is guilty of an eternal sin*. "Forgiven sins are sins that are taken up by God from the burdened conscience of the sinner, and, as it were, 'cast behind His back' or into the depths of the sea, but unforgiven sins abide for ever on the souls that committed them. The language is, of course, strongly pictorial, but most solemnly significant" (Morison).

30. Because they said. For in this saying of theirs they rejected every possible element of the divine anxiety to save. No road remained whereby the saving grace of God could enter into their hearts.

3. The true kinsfolk, iii. 31-35: Matt. xii. 46-50; Luke viii. 19-21.

31. His brethren, Matt. xiii. 55; Mark vi. 3. Perhaps literal brethren; some think sons of Joseph by a former wife; others sons of Cleophas and Mary, the sister and namesake of Mary the mother of Jesus.

The third theory was introduced by Jerome, avowedly in defence of the extreme value set on the virgin life by himself and several of his contemporaries. It has no ground in tradition, and therefore rests exclusively on what evidence can be adduced for it from Scripture. It proceeds on the idea that James, our Lord's brother, was one of the apostles (Gal. i. 19); if so, he must have been James the son of Alphæus. The mother of James and Josés—Mary—was present at the crucifixion, and she must have been the wife of Alphæus, who was father of James; John (xix. 25) tells us that "Mary of Cleophas or Clopas," perhaps the Virgin's sister, was at the crucifixion; she

33 and thy brethren without seek for thee. And he answered  
 34 them, saying, Who is my mother, or my brethren? And he  
 looked round about on them which sat about him, and said,  
 35 Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall

was the mother of James; James was therefore the *cousin* of our Lord. This statement is further supported by asserting that in Scripture brother frequently denotes merely relationship, as when Abraham calls Lot his *brother* (Gen. xiii. 8); by the plausible identification of Alphæus and Clopas; by stating the improbability that there could be two sets of brothers called James, Josès, and Simon, the one disciples, the other the brethren of our Lord. On the other hand, it is alleged, and with great truth, that this argument from Scripture is very weak. It is not at all improbable that there were two sets of brothers bearing these names, the commonest among the Jews, more especially if they were cousins. It is almost impossible to believe that the brethren of our Lord were among the twelve apostles, as this theory supposes, because we find (1) that our Lord's brethren were not among His followers *after* the calling of the Twelve (compare Mark iii. 13-19 with 31-35); (2) John tells us that on to near the close of His ministry His brethren did not believe in Him (John vii. 3); (3) His brethren were most likely constrained to believe in Him by our Lord's special appearance to James after His resurrection (1 Cor. xv. 7); (4) after they did become believers, and were of consequence in the infant Church, they are distinguished from the disciples (Acts i. 14). Our Lord's brethren are always mentioned in connection with Joseph and Mary, never in connection with Clopas and his wife Mary; and, lastly, it is likely that when the Scripture says brethren, it means brethren and not cousins.

As to the other theories. There is no doubt that the one connected with the name of Epiphanius, which makes our Lord's brethren to be the sons of Joseph by a former wife, was very common in the early church, and had its origin in Palestine, where exalted views about the virtue of a virgin life did not prevail to the same extent as in the West. But it is equally clear that this view did attain its popularity because of the assumption and sentiment that the Virgin remained ever virgin. The Epiphanian view derives no direct support from Scripture, and has the defect, though in a less striking form, of not giving to the word *brethren* its ordinary meaning.

The only real argument against supposing that the brethren of our Lord were the sons of Mary, and His real brothers, is derived from the words of Jesus on the cross to John, when He gave him charge of the Virgin, His mother. It is argued that if Mary had had other sons able to care for her, she would not have gone to the house of the son of Zebedee, nor would Jesus have sent her there.

The whole subject is ably treated in Bishop Lightfoot's *Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians*, p. 252.

33. **Who is.** He who on the cross was so tender towards His mother does not disown her here. "He despises not His mother, but places before her His Father" (Bengel). "The most sacred of earthly ties lost its greatness before the spiritual kinship in the new deathless communion He was founding" (Geikie), Luke ii. 49.

34. **And he looked round about.** Matthew says that He stretched forth His hands towards His disciples.

do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother.

CHAP. IV. 1 And he began again to teach by the sea-side: and there was gathered unto him a great multitude, so that he entered into a ship,<sup>1</sup> and sat in the sea; and the whole  
2 multitude was by the sea on the land. And he taught them many things by parables, and said unto them in his doctrine,<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> boat

<sup>2</sup> teaching

35. Shall do the will, etc. "Surely it is good to be akin to those who are thus nearly allied to Christ, and to have fellowship with those who have fellowship with Jesus" (Matt. Henry). "Ye are my friends," said our Lord in His last long discourse, "if ye do whatsoever I command you" (John xv. 14; compare John xiv. 21; Heb. ii. 11). There is a deeper spiritual relationship than any natural one, a truth continually taught by our Lord, who ever invested natural kinship with holy dignity. He early felt His own spiritual relation to His Father in heaven, even when it separated Him for a time from His earthly parents. "How is it that ye sought me?" He said to His mother when Joseph and Mary returned to seek Him, a boy of twelve, in the temple. "Wist ye not that I must be in my Father's house?" (Luke ii. 49). The rule He laid on Himself He applied to His disciples. "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me" (Matt. x. 37).

#### VI.—FOURTH PREACHING JOURNEY IN GALILEE, IV. 1—V. 20.

##### 1. *Parables of the Kingdom*, iv. 1—34.

1. He entered into a boat, probably near Bethsaida, where the beach rises rapidly, and there is deep water within a few yards of the shore. "There is no such *natural church* along the coast of Gennesaret." All could see and hear, some on jutting rocks, others in rows on the sloping beach.

2. The parables. This is the first time the word is used in its common meaning in Mark's Gospel. The word means (1) in classical Greek, (a) a placing together, (b) a comparison, and (c) the simplest argument from analogy; (2) in Hellenistic Greek what the Jews called *mashal*, or similitude. Hence the word parable is used (1) in the Old Testament for

(a) *A very short proverb*, 1 Sam. x. 12: "Therefore it became a *parable*, Is Saul also among the prophets?"

(b) *A dark prophetic utterance*, Num. xxiii. 7—10: "And he took up his parable, and said, Balak the king of Moab hath brought me from Aram, out of the mountains of the east, saying, Come, curse me Jacob, and come defy Israel," etc.

(c) *An enigmatic maxim*, Ps. lxxviii. 2: "I will open my mouth in a parable: I will utter dark sayings of old."

(d) *A metaphor expanded into a narrative*, Ezek. xx. 49: "Doth he not speak parables?"

(2) In the New Testament for

(a) *A short pithy saying*, Luke iv. 23; Mark vii. 17.

(b) *The figurative character of the Levitical ordinances*, Heb. ix. 8, 9:



3,4 Hearken; behold, there went out a sower to sow;<sup>1</sup> and it

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<sup>1</sup> a sower went forth to sow

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"The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holy place hath not yet been made manifest, while as the first tabernacle is yet standing: which is a parable."

(c) *A mere comparison without narrative*, Mark xiii. 28: "Now from the fig-tree learn her parable."

(d) *An earthly story with a heavenly meaning*, as the parables of our Lord (Smith's *Dict. of the Bible*).

The parables of our Lord differ from *fables* by their higher spiritual aim and the natural character of their incidents; from *myths* by their truthfulness; from *proverbs* by their expanded form; from *allegories* in being complete and yet not always self-interpreting. Parables have always been popular in the East. The Rabbis commonly began to teach the young disciple in parables. Our Lord reversed their method. He began by the simple words of the Sermon on the Mount, then a change came, and He spoke in parable when He found the hard-heartedness of the people. A Master of the hidden truth, Jesus knew how to make the doctrine of the kingdom touch the mind and thrill the heart of the people, by means of the forms and figures which the lake and the land made familiar to them. "The lake gave Him the picture of casting the net, which at every throw collected a quantity of fishes, good and bad; . . . the shore, the oasis with rich black mould . . . here the rocky ground of the hill ranges and the crumbling basalt rocks of the lake-shore, there the irrepressible tropical luxuriance of weeds, and the plunderings of numberless birds. The road which meandered by the lake suggested the seed-corn trodden down by the wayside or fruitlessly sprouting, and the pearls which the passing merchant had brought from Arabia and Persia by Damascus to Galilee. Jesus had musingly watched the wife or maiden busily mixing with skilful hand the wheaten meal and the leaven. As He looked at all these material things He added to them the spiritual leaven, and presented when need arose His nervous pictures before His people as their most nourishing bread" (Keim).

(1) *The Sower*, iv. 3-25: Matt. xiii. 1-23; Luke viii. 4-16.

**3. Hearken.** Our Lord is beginning a new method of teaching, and calls special attention to it at the beginning and at the end of the first parable. Mark, as usual, preserves graphically the first word *hearken*, inviting attention to something new. Luke tells us that He ended the story by raising His voice when He said, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."

**Behold, there went out a sower.** Some suppose that Jesus pointed from His boat to a man actually sowing in sight of the people. This is highly probable, for a diligent study of the Gospels reveals the fact that very many of our Lord's parables were spoken in sight of the scenes they describe. "In the fields close to the shore may be seen the hard-beaten paths, into which no seed can penetrate; the flights of innumerable birds ready to pick it up; the rocks thinly covered with soil, and the stony ground; the dense tangled growth of weeds and thistles; and the rich, deep loam on which the harvests grew with unwonted luxuriance" (Farrar).

came to pass, as he sowed, some fell<sup>1</sup> by the wayside, and  
 5 the fowls<sup>2</sup> of the air came and devoured it up. And some  
 fell on stony ground,<sup>3</sup> where it had not much earth; and  
 immediately<sup>4</sup> it sprang up, because it had no depth of earth :  
 6 but when the sun was up,<sup>5</sup> it was scorched ; and because it  
 7 had no root, it withered away. And some<sup>6</sup> fell among thorns,  
 and the thorns grew up, and choked it, and it yielded no  
 8 fruit. And other fell on good ground, and did yield fruit  
 that sprang up and increased ;<sup>7</sup> and brought forth, some  
 9 thirty, and some sixty, and some an hundred.<sup>3</sup> And he said  
 unto them, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

<sup>1</sup> some seed fell<sup>2</sup> birds<sup>3</sup> and other fell on the rocky ground<sup>4</sup> straightway<sup>5</sup> risen<sup>6</sup> other<sup>7</sup> growing up and increasing<sup>8</sup> thirtyfold, sixtyfold, and a hundredfold

4. **By the wayside**, *i.e.* on the hard footpath which passed through the field. Luke adds graphically, *and it was trodden upon*.

5. **Stony ground**, perhaps the crumbling basaltic fragments of rock, but also a thin coating of mould covering the surface of a rock. "It is not a soil mingled with stones that is meant here; for these, however numerous or large, would not certainly hinder the roots from striking deeply downward, as these roots, with the instinct they possess, would feel and find their way, penetrating between the interstices of the stones, and would so reach the moisture below; but what is meant is ground where a thin superficial coating of mould covered the face of a rock which stretched below it, and formed an impassable barrier, rendering it wholly impossible that the roots should penetrate beyond a certain depth, or draw up any supplies of nourishment from beneath" (Trench).

7. **Among thorns**, *lit. the thorns*. Travellers tell us that in the hot valleys on the western side of the Sea of Galilee, where the soil is good, thorns and thistles grow rapidly and luxuriantly. No horse can break through their tangled brakes. The common Oriental custom was to burn them down before sowing the seed; but the roots often remained. Among these roots some of the seed fell; they grew up with it and choked the young corn. "Thorns are a good guard to the corn when they are in the hedge, but a bad inmate when they are in the field" (M. Henry).

8. **On good ground**, *lit. on the good ground*. The different results imply different degrees of fertility. The hundredfold was probably the common expression for an unusually good crop. "Then Isaac sowed in that land and received in that same year an *hundredfold*; and the Lord blessed him" (Gen. xxvi. 12). There is one degree of unfruitfulness, and three causes of unfruitfulness; there is one *cause* of fruitfulness, and three *degrees* of fruitfulness.

9. **He that hath ears to hear**. The usual rabbinical phrase for calling the attention of their scholars to something of special importance. Our Lord uses it on *six* occasions:—(1) "And if ye are willing to receive it, this is Elijah, which is to come. He that hath ears," etc. (Matt. xi. 14, 15); (2) "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He that hath ears," etc. (Matt. xii. 43); (3) In this passage; (4) "Neither was anything secret, but that it should come to light. He that

10 And when he was alone, they that were about him with  
 11 the twelve asked of him the parable. And he said unto  
 them, Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the king-  
 dom of God: but unto them that are without, all *these* things  
 12 are done in parables: that seeing they may see, and not  
 perceive: and hearing they may hear, and not understand;  
 lest at any time they should be converted, and *their* sins  
 13 should be forgiven them.<sup>1</sup> And he said unto them, Know ye  
 not this parable? and how then will ye know all parables?<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> lest haply they should turn again, and it should be forgiven them

<sup>2</sup> and how shall ye know all the parables

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hath ears," etc. (Mark iv. 23); (5) Mark vii. 16, but omitted in the Revised Version; (6) "Salt, therefore, is good; but if even the salt have lost its savour . . . He that hath ears," etc. (Luke xiv. 34-35).

11. **Mystery.** That inner reality or kernel of spiritual truth, which the multitude did not like to think of, and which Christ has made a revealed secret. A *mystery* was something into which *disciples* were *initiated*, and which was, therefore, as well known to them as it was hidden from others. The modern use of the word is quite different from its New Testament meaning. With us it is used to imply something we do not now, and never can understand; in the New Testament it always means something *once* hidden, but now revealed (Col. i. 26; 1 Tim. iii. 16; Matt. xi. 25, 26; Rev. xvii. 5). The disciples were initiated into the *mystery* of the kingdom, and knew it; outsiders did not know it.

12. **That seeing they may see, and not perceive, etc.** A double illustration drawn from the two senses of sight and hearing, and conveying a confessedly difficult idea, which is made the more difficult by the additional clause, *lest haply they should turn again, and it should be forgiven them*. The clause suggests that parables were a means of preventing the gospel of the kingdom being known, and that they were used as such. The clause in Matthew, *because seeing they see not*, however, shows that what is really in our Lord's mind is the fact that many of His hearers will not, as a matter of fact, either perceive or understand, although they are seeing and hearing His deeds and words. When Peter and John came to the sepulchre, they both *saw* the empty tomb, but only John *perceived* that this meant a risen Saviour. The whole multitude to whom Christ spoke His parable followed His gestures, and heard His words; but whether they were able to perceive and understand His meaning, depended on the way that they saw and heard. Matthew quotes a similar deadening effect of Old Testament prophecy on the Israelites in the days of Isaiah (Matt. xiii. 13-15; comp. Isa. vi. 9, 10). Prophecy and parable are meant to be blessings, but, like all misused blessings they may and do become curses; for they have a hardening effect on those that carelessly hear them. "Unwillingness to see is punished by incapacity of seeing. The natural punishment of spiritual perversity is spiritual blindness."

13. **How then will ye know.** Mark alone gives this question. It is as if our Lord meant to tell them that He hoped to see in them an ever-growing insight into the mystery of the kingdom cultivated by a long course of teaching in parables, and that this first one was so simple they might well understand it.

14, 15 The sower soweth the word. And these are they by the wayside, where the word is sown; but when<sup>1</sup> they have heard, Satan cometh immediately,<sup>2</sup> and taketh away the word  
 16 that was sown in their hearts. And these are they likewise which are sown on stony ground,<sup>3</sup> who, when they have heard  
 17 the word, immediately<sup>2</sup> receive it with gladness; and have no root in themselves, and so endure but for a time;<sup>4</sup> afterward, when affliction or persecution ariseth for the word's sake,  
 18 immediately they are offended.<sup>5</sup> And these are they which  
 19 are sown among thorns; such as hear the word,<sup>6</sup> and the

<sup>1</sup> and when<sup>2</sup> straightway<sup>3</sup> are sown upon the rocky *places*<sup>4</sup> but endure for a while: then when<sup>5</sup> straightway they stumble<sup>6</sup> and others are they that are sown among the thorns: these are they that have heard

14. The sower soweth the word, or, as Luke says, *The seed is the word of God*. The metaphor is not unusual in the New Testament. "I planted," said Paul, "Apollos watered; but God gave the increase" (1 Cor. iii. 6; compare also Col. i. 5, 6, and Jas. i. 21).

15. And these are they by the wayside, where the word is sown. There is a wayside where the word is sown, the hardened hearers, hardened by a dull familiarity with divine things, or by worldliness, or by evil habits of life. "The wayside is the heart beaten and dried by the passage of evil thoughts" (Hugh of St. Victor). "If we break not up the fallow ground, by preparing our hearts for the word, and humbling them to it, and engaging our own attention; and if we cover not the seed afterwards by meditation and prayer; . . . we are as the highway" (Matt. Henry).

Taketh away. "*Snatcheth*, Matt. xiii. 19. It is done in a moment; by a smile at the end of the sermon; by a silly criticism at the church door; by foolish gossip on the way home. These are the *fowls of the air* whom the Evil One uses in this task" (Farrar).

16. These are they likewise which are sown on stony ground. The metaphor suddenly changes, and the hearers become the seed. The stony-ground hearers have shallow, impulsive natures. They exhibit rapid change, strong emotion, a quicker show of saving change than is real. They receive the word straightway with gladness, as Herod heard John (Mark vi. 20), but have no persistence. The verses are a warning against attempting to produce real conversion of souls by mere excitement. When anything comes to test the moral nature, they are offended, *i.e.* they stumble, or are tripped up. They have no root in themselves, and religion must be a personal matter; it cannot be forced on by religious machinery from without.

18. And these are they which are sown among thorns. There is some depth of earth and some root, and perhaps some promise of fruitfulness in the green blade; for the thorns are underground when the seed is sown. "This went farther than the other, for it had root . . . but the good gained by the word is insensibly overcome and overborne by the things of this world. Prosperity destroys the word in the heart, as much as persecution does, and more dangerously because more silently; the stones spoiled the root, the thorns spoil the fruit" (Matt. Henry). Our Lord instances three kinds of

cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it  
 20 becometh unfruitful. And these are they which are sown on good ground;<sup>1</sup> such as hear the word, and receive it, and bring<sup>2</sup> forth fruit, some thirty-fold, some sixty, and some an hundred.

21 And he said unto them, Is a candle<sup>3</sup> brought to be put under a bushel, or under a bed? and not to be set on a  
 22 candlestick?<sup>4</sup> For there is nothing hid, which shall not be manifested; neither was any thing kept secret, but that it  
 23 should come abroad.<sup>5</sup> If any man have ears to hear, let him

<sup>1</sup> the good ground<sup>2</sup> and accept it and bear fruit<sup>3</sup> lamp<sup>4</sup> lampstand<sup>5</sup> save that it should be manifested: neither was anything made secret but that it should come to light

thorns, the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things.

19. The cares of this world, lit. *distracting anxieties*.

The deceitfulness of riches. It is not riches, but their deceitfulness which chokes the word; and riches can only be deceitful when they have been trusted in.

The lusts of other things. Mark adds this phrase, as Luke adds *the pleasures of this life*. Lust (ἐπιθυμία) in the New Testament commonly means any desire, not necessarily evil; it is used of a good and holy longing in Phil. i. 23 and 1 Thess. ii. 17. The phrase in the text is really *the lusts of the other things*, and suggests any well-known inclination having the same effects on the spiritual life as *the cares of this world*, and *the deceitfulness of riches*.

20. Which are sown on good ground. The one mark which distinguishes the seed sown on good ground is fruitfulness; according to old theologians, the sign of having saving faith was doing good works (Jas. ii. 18). There is a growth in well-doing—first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear; and there is variety in well-doing—some thirty, some sixty, and some an hundred-fold; but the growth is making for the fruit, and there is always some fruit-bearing.

21. Is a candle brought to be put under a bushel? Candle and candlestick should be lamp and lampstand; bed should be couch. The Jews did not use beds raised from the floor, so that a lamp could be put under them; their beds were mats or mattresses spread usually on the floor. The word used means a couch. Bushel was a measure of capacity containing about a peck.

The meaning of this short parable, and its connection with what goes before, is greatly obscured in our Authorized Version; it should be read in the Revised Version.

22. For there is nothing hid which shall not be manifested; better, *For there is nothing hid, save that it should be manifested*. The short parable is a renewed exhortation to fruit-bearing, and a promise that the mystery of the kingdom even was hid in order that it might shine more brightly when it was manifested at last. So, whatever truths Jesus was then sowing in the hearts of

- 24 hear. And he said unto them, Take heed what ye hear : with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you :  
 25 and unto you that hear shall more be given.<sup>1</sup> For he that hath, to him shall be given ; and he that hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he hath.  
 26 And he said, So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should  
 27 cast seed into the ground ;<sup>2</sup> and should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth  
 28 not how. For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself,<sup>3</sup> first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear.  
 29 But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle,<sup>4</sup> because the harvest is come.

<sup>1</sup> and more shall be given unto you<sup>2</sup> upon the earth<sup>3</sup> the earth beareth fruit of herself<sup>4</sup> is ripe, straightway he putteth forth

His followers, were sown to reappear in fruit. "Do not suppose that what I now commit to you in secret, I would have concealed for ever ; the light is kindled in you by Me, that by your ministry it may disperse the darkness of the whole world" (Erasmus). When the Spirit came and brought all those things to the remembrance of the apostles, He filled in all the outlines of truth which they before possessed, and they saw, so as to teach the meaning of the parable.

24. **With what measure**, etc. "If we do not *use*, we *lose*" (Matt. Henry).

(2) *The Seed*, iv. 26-29.

26. **So is the kingdom of God**. This parable is the only one peculiar to Mark. The particle *so* leads us to look forward to find the one special aspect of the kingdom presented in this little parable. It represents a man casting seed into the ground, and then resting and waiting day after day till the great forces of nature do their work, and the harvest time comes. It seems to be a short sermon on the text, "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation."

27. **The seed**. It is the power of growth in the seed itself that is to be looked at.

**Grow up**. "It will come up . . . let but the word of Christ have the place it ought to have in a soul, and it will show itself" (Matt. Henry).

**Knoweth not how**. "We know as little of the growing above ground as of the growing under ground" (Stier) ; but it is an orderly growth both in natural and in spiritual things.

28. **Of herself** ; of its own accord, Acts xii. 10. Man may do much. He can hinder. He can trample down the growing stalks, or let them be choked with thorns and weeds. He can help in preparing the soil, in draining, manuring, weeding. But the parable insists there are limits to his power, and when he reaches these he must wait, lying down to rest every evening, getting up every morning, doing nothing for the seed. A higher power than his must do the real work. Paul may plant, and Apollos water, but it is God that gives the *increase*. The living, growing power of the gospel is the "power of the living mind and heart of the living God."

- 30 And he said, Whereunto shall we liken the kingdom of  
 31 God? or with what comparison<sup>1</sup> shall we compare it? *It is*  
 like a grain of mustard seed, which, when it is sown in the  
 32 earth, is less than all the seeds that be in the earth: but<sup>2</sup>  
 when it is sown, it groweth up, and becometh greater than all  
 herbs, and shooteth out great branches; so that the fowls of  
 the air may<sup>3</sup> lodge under the shadow of it.  
 33 And with many such parables spake he the word unto  
 34 them, as they were able to hear *it*. But without a parable  
 spake he not unto them: and when they were alone, he  
 expounded all things to his disciples.<sup>4</sup>  
 35 And the same day,<sup>5</sup> when the even was come, he saith unto  
 36 them, Let us pass over unto the other side. And when they  
 had sent away the multitude, they took him even as he was

<sup>1</sup> And he said, How shall we liken the kingdom of God? or in what parable?

<sup>2</sup> though it be less than all the seeds that are upon the earth, yet when

<sup>3</sup> of the heaven can

<sup>4</sup> but privately to his own disciples he expounded all things

<sup>5</sup> And on that day

(3) *The Mustard Seed*, 30-34: cf. Matt. xiii. 31-32.

31. **Less than all seeds.** Jewish proverb, "small as a grain of mustard seed." It was the smallest seed the husbandman was accustomed to sow, and became a plant greater than any garden herb he grew.

32. **Great branches.** Thomson saw the mustard-tree as tall as a horse and its rider. Hackett tells us of plants from seven to nine feet high, and the birds lighting on their branches. "A stalk of mustard seed," says one of the Rabbis, "was in my garden, into which I was used to climb, as men do into a fig-tree." The parable teaches what vast power of growth there was in the minute germ of the kingdom of God represented by the disciple company, and also in the divine principle implanted in the human soul. The one has become Christendom, and will go on growing; the other changes heart, conduct, and life. "The difference between a grain of mustard seed and a great tree is nothing to that between a young convert and a glorified saint in heaven" (Matt. Henry).

2. *Stilling the Storm*, 35-41: cf. Matt. viii. 23-27; Luke viii. 22-25.

35. **The same day.** "How busy Jesus had been! He had healed a demoniac (Matt. xii. 22); encountered the opposition of His friends (Mark iii. 20, 21), and of His foes (Matt. xii. 24); and probably preached several sermons. No wonder He was weary" (Rice).

**The other side.** "In our Lord's time the contrast of this thinly-inhabited region with the busy and populous towns that lay close together on the plain of Gennesareth, must have been very striking" (Farrar). He not unfrequently sought rest by putting those six miles of water between Him and the crowds He taught.

36. **Even as he was.** Another graphic touch of Mark, bringing out the incessant labours of Jesus, that left no time so much as to eat. He left as He

in the ship.<sup>1</sup> And there were also with him other little ships.<sup>2</sup>  
 37 And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat  
 38 into the ship, so that it was now full.<sup>3</sup> And he was in the  
 hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow:<sup>4</sup> and they awake  
 him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we  
 39 perish? And he arose,<sup>5</sup> and rebuked the wind, and said unto  
 the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was  
 40 a great calm. And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful?  
 41 how is it that ye have no faith?<sup>6</sup> And they feared exceedingly,  
 and said one to another, What manner of man is this,<sup>7</sup>  
 that even the wind and the sea obey him?

<sup>1</sup> And leaving the multitude, they take him with them, as he was, in the boat

<sup>2</sup> And other boats were with him

<sup>3</sup> into the boat, inasmuch that the boat was now filling

<sup>4</sup> And he himself was in the stern, asleep on the cushion

<sup>5</sup> awoke

<sup>6</sup> have ye not yet faith?

<sup>7</sup> Who then is this

was, without preparation for the journey, and so wearied that when He lay down in the stern He fell asleep almost at once, as Jonah had done, who went down into the sides of the ship and lay, and was fast asleep (Jonah i. 5). But Jonah was tired with working hard to shirk his duty; Jesus was exhausted while doing His Father's business.

37. **A great storm**, *i.e.* a hurricane of wind. Luke (viii. 23) uses the same word. Matthew (viii. 24) has a word which usually means *earthquake*, to denote the effect on the sea. The Sea of Galilee lies very low, is surrounded by high ranges of hills divided by long, deep glens "like gigantic funnels to draw the cold winds down from the mountains." It is still liable to sudden storms. Cf. Thomson's *Land and the Book*, p. 374; MacGregor's *The Rob Roy on the Jordan*, pp. 335-339.

38. **Pillow**. The word is only found in this text. It means the leathern cushion of the steersman. "The high stern made a safe and sloping place, where our Saviour slept in the storm" (MacGregor).

39. **Peace, be still**. Mark alone gives us the very words Jesus used, and tells us that He spoke to the waves as well as to the wind. He gives details found in no other Gospel. "It was evening—there were other boats—a great storm of wind—the waves beat into the boat—He was asleep on a pillow in the hinder part of the ship." Matthew adds that the boat was being hidden under the waves (Matt. viii. 24). **Peace** or **Hush** to silence the roar of the wind (comp. Ps. cvi. 9, "He rebuked the Red Sea").

**Be still** (comp. note on i. 25), to the angry, threatening, yawning waves. Matthew tells us that Jesus first calmed the disciples, and then stilled the tempest.

**Calm**. After a storm there is usually a long heaving of the waves, not so here.

40. **Have no faith**; R. V., *Have ye not yet faith?* Where is your faith? They had faith to go to Christ, but (1) they had not *enough* of it; "little faith," and so were *fearful*: they had not the faith which leaves all to Christ. (2) They had not their faith ready for use; when it was wanted suddenly, it was not there.

41. **Obey him**. The miracles of Jesus show that the God who lives and



CHAP. V. 1 And they came over unto the other side of the sea,  
 2 into the country of the Gadarenes.<sup>1</sup> And when he was come  
 out of the ship, immediately<sup>2</sup> there met him out of the tombs  
 3 a man with an unclean spirit, who had *his* dwelling among  
 the tombs; and no man could bind him, no, not with chains:  
 4 because that he had been often bound with fetters and chains,  
 and the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the  
 fetters broken in pieces: neither could any *man*<sup>3</sup> tame him.

<sup>1</sup> Gerasenes<sup>2</sup> boat, straightway<sup>3</sup> and no man hath strength to

moves and acts in all nature is also the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, "whatsoever evil He sendeth on me in this miserable life, He will turn the same to my salvation: seeing He is both able to do it, as being God Almighty, and willing to do it as being my bountiful Father" (*Palatine Catechism*). "As certainly as He could not sink with His disciples on that day, He will not suffer His disciples to sink on this" (Schleiermacher). Cf. with whole passage Ps. cvii. 23-30; Jonah i.; Acts xxvii.

3. *The Gerasene Demoniac*, v. 1-20: Matt. viii. 28-34; Luke viii. 26-39.

1. **Gadarenes**, R. V. *Gerasenes*, belonging to Gergesa, now Khersa. A little south of the town there is a spot answering to the narrative—hill-sides with caves for tombs, pasture which wild hogs still frequent, and a steep slope with very deep water quite close to the shore. Christ is now among the wild hills to the east of the Sea of Galilee, in the district called Gaulonitis, formerly Bashan.

2. **A man**. The boat was touching the land, when a demoniac, naked (Luke), and so fierce that he had made the roads impassable (Matthew), came leaping towards them, his body covered with scarcely healed wounds (Mark) self-inflicted with stones. "Amid all the boasted civilisation of antiquity, there existed no hospitals, no penitentiaries, no asylums; and unfortunates of this class, being too dangerous and desperate for human intercourse, would only be driven forth from among their fellow-men, and restrained from mischief by measures at once inadequate and cruel" (Farrar).

3. **Chains**. The word for any band confining hands or feet, not necessarily metal; in Ps. cxlix. 8, chains are distinguished from fetters of iron. "Satan, as a master, is bad; his work, much worse; his wages, worst of all. If Satan doth fetter us, it is indifferent to him whether it be by a cable or a hair; nay, the smallest sins are his greatest stratagems" (Fuller). Satan is most tyrannous where he is obeyed most. This man was doubly bound when he was in fetters. The invisible bonds of the Evil One were about him, and held him faster than the chains of his neighbours. When he broke loose, it was to run away from his friends and not from his jailor; he was never less free than when he had burst his fetters—the picture of a sinner.

4. **Because he had been bound**. Luke tells us that his neighbours were constantly on their guard against him: "And he was *kept bound* with chains and in fetters;" or as it ought to be translated, "And he was bound in chains and fetters, being under guard." Mark, as usual, gives the most graphic description of this homicidal maniac.

5 And always, night and day, he was in the mountains, and  
 6 in the tombs,<sup>1</sup> crying, and cutting himself with stones. But  
 7 when he saw Jesus afar off,<sup>2</sup> he ran and worshipped him, and  
 cried with a loud voice, and said,<sup>3</sup> What have I to do with  
 thee, Jesus, *thou* Son of the most high God? I adjure thee  
 8 by God, that thou torment me not. For he said unto him,  
 9 Come out of the man, *thou* unclean spirit.<sup>4</sup> And he asked  
 him, What *is* thy name? And he answered, saying,<sup>5</sup> My  
 10 name *is* Legion: for we are many. And he besought him  
 much that he would not send them away out of the country.  
 11 Now there was nigh unto the mountains a great herd of swine

<sup>1</sup> in the tombs and mountains<sup>2</sup> from afar<sup>3</sup> and crying out with a loud voice, he saith<sup>4</sup> Come forth, thou unclean spirit, out of the man<sup>5</sup> And he saith unto him

5. In the mountains and in the tombs; the restlessness of frenzy; now sitting in the ghastly solitude of an empty tomb, then rushing wildly to the hill-tops. "On descending from the heights of Lebanon, I found myself in a cemetery . . . The silence of the night was now broken by fierce yells and howlings, which I discovered proceeded from a naked maniac, who was fighting with some wild dogs for a bone" (Warburton, *The Crescent and the Cross*, ii. 352).

Cutting himself with stones, for the body had become as dulled to pain as the soul had to all the higher feelings.

7. What have I to do, etc., i. 24.

Torment me not. It is torment to him not to be allowed to torment others. "The worst of all creatures hates punishment, and can say, Lead me not into pain; only the good heart can say, Lead me not into temptation. If we can as heartily pray against sin for the avoiding of displeasure, as against punishment when we have displeased, there is true grace in the soul" (Hall).

Most High God, a name of God frequent in the Old Testament, and sometimes, as Gen. xiv. 18, where Melchizedek is called *the priest of the Most High God*, and Num. xxiv. 16 in Balaam's prophecy, used where there was a point of contact between Jews and Gentiles. Sometimes used in formulas of exorcism, and therefore the name of God oftenest heard by demoniacs, and the one they often used (Luke viii. 28; Acts xvi. 17).

9. Legion. Probably to terrify Jesus, for the Roman legion was the fearful instrument of oppression and the sign of terror among the conquered nations. It consisted of 6000 men. The answers show how completely disordered the man's mind was. When Jesus asked his name, probably to soothe him, he confounded himself with the overwhelming force which held him in bondage, and sought to frighten Jesus by threatening Him with the same thralldom. Then his consciousness gets doubled, and he passes with insane inconsequence from singular to plural. For we are many, etc.

10. Out of the country, Luke viii. 31; "into the deep" or abyss of Hades.

11. Great herds of swine. It was not lawful, according to Jewish law, to eat swine flesh or to possess such a herd (Lev. xi. 8).

12 feeding. And all the devils besought<sup>1</sup> him, saying, Send us  
 13 into the swine, that we may enter into them. And forthwith  
 Jesus gave them leave.<sup>2</sup> And the unclean spirits went<sup>3</sup> out,  
 and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down  
 a steep place into the sea, (they were about two thousand;)  
 14 and<sup>4</sup> were choked in the sea. And they that fed the swine  
 fled, and told *it* in the city, and in the country. And they  
 15 went<sup>3</sup> out to see what it was that was done.<sup>5</sup> And they come  
 to Jesus, and see him that was possessed of the devil, and  
 had the legion, sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind:<sup>6</sup>  
 16 and they were afraid. And they that saw *it* told them how it  
 befell to him that was possessed of the devil, and *also* con-

<sup>1</sup> and they besought<sup>2</sup> and he gave them leave<sup>3</sup> came<sup>4</sup> and the herd rushed down the steep into the sea: *in number* about two thousand; and they<sup>5</sup> had come to pass<sup>6</sup> and behold the demoniac sitting clothed and in his right mind, *even* him that had the legion

For the question of demoniac possession and the special case described here, see Trench, *Notes on Miracles*, pp. 161-191; Alford, *New Testament for English Readers*, i. 56-58. "I will only suggest that perhaps we make to ourselves a difficulty here, too easily assuming that the lower animal world is wholly shut up in itself, and incapable of receiving impressions from that which is above it. The assumption is one unwarranted by deeper investigations, which lead rather to an opposite conclusion,—not to a breaking down of the boundaries between the two worlds, but to the showing in what wonderful ways the lower is receptive of impressions from the higher, both for good and for evil. Nor does this working of the spiritual on the physical life stand isolated in this single passage of Scripture, but we are taught the same lesson throughout" (Rom. viii. 22) (Trench). There is no doubt whatever that this miracle suggests very many difficulties which are much more easily raised than answered, which enter upon the most obscure fields of human and animal psychology, and which include the whole range of mysterious sympathies existing between man and the dumb creation. As for the destruction of property, surely to free the neighbourhood from a dangerous maniac was cheaply purchased by the destruction of a herd of infuriated swine.

14. **In the city and in the country.** They ran shouting, calling out to every one they met.

15. **Clothed.** Luke tells us that the demoniac was naked. This word of Mark's is one of those *undesigned coincidences* which prove the accuracy of the Evangelists' narratives.

16. **How it befell him.** They all saw a maniac recovered whom they had known, whom they had been obliged to defend themselves against, who had been the terror of the country-side, his reason restored, peaceable without a fetter, decently clad, listening to the Great Teacher. Had they known it, they saw the presence of a power greater than that of the Evil One exerted to produce conversion of a most striking kind, change from the old evil state to a new life, and to drive out that impurity of life from which unsoundness of mind and body so frequently comes.

17 cerning the swine. And they began to pray<sup>1</sup> him to depart  
 18 out of their coasts. And when he was come into the ship,<sup>2</sup>  
 he that had been possessed with the devil prayed him<sup>3</sup> that  
 19 he might be with him. Howbeit Jesus suffered him not,<sup>4</sup> but  
 saith unto him, Go home to thy friends,<sup>5</sup> and tell them how  
 great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had com-  
 20 passion on thee.<sup>6</sup> And he departed,<sup>7</sup> and began to publish  
 in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him : and  
 all *men* did marvel.

<sup>1</sup> to beseech<sup>3</sup> possessed with demons besought him<sup>5</sup> Go to thy house and unto thy friends<sup>7</sup> and he went his way<sup>2</sup> and as he was entering into the boat<sup>4</sup> and he suffered him not<sup>6</sup> and how he had mercy on thee

17. **To depart.** "They felt more selfish vexation at the loss of the swine than grateful pleasure at the cure of the man." The selfishness of unbelief. Their prayer was heard: He did depart: He took them at their word; when once our unthankfulness grows weary of Christ, who can pity us when we are deprived of His presence?

18. **That he might be with him.** His heart was swelling with gratitude; he was ashamed at the conduct of his countrymen; he could not feel safe far from his Saviour (Matt. xii. 44, 45). Every soul truly delivered from Satan's bondage desires to keep near Christ; but sometimes nearness to Him means working for Him as well as sitting at His feet.

19. **Tell them.** "The greatest demoniac became a preacher to ten cities. In the dark land of Gerasa, Christ leaves for a while a representative of Himself, since they cannot bear His personal presence" (Lange). It is worth noticing how successful the demoniac's ministry was; for when our Lord returned again to that country, the people came in crowds to hear Him (vii. 31-viii. 9). The time was to come, through the preaching of the demoniac restored, when

"E'en the witless Gadarene,  
 Preferring Christ to swine, shall learn  
 That life is sweetest when 'tis clean."

"Though we are not tortured by the devil, yet he holds us as his slaves till the Son of God delivers us from his tyranny. Naked, torn, and disfigured, we wander about till He restores us to soundness of mind. It remains that, in magnifying His grace, we testify our gratitude" (Calvin).

20. **Decapolis**, the country belonging to a league of towns from Damascus to the Arabian desert, joined in alliance, offensive and defensive, against native freebooters and marauding Bedouins. The list of towns varies, but commonly includes (1) Scythopolis (west of Jordan), (2) Hippos, (3) Gadara, (4) Pella, (5) Philadelphia, (6) Gerasa, (7) Dion, (8) Canatha, (9) Raphana, (10) Damascus.

- 21 And when Jesus was passed over again by ship unto the other side, much people gathered unto him : and he was nigh unto  
 22 the sea.<sup>1</sup> And, behold, there cometh one of the rulers of the synagogue, Jairus by name; and when he saw him, he fell at  
 23 his feet, and besought him greatly,<sup>2</sup> saying, My little daughter lieth at the point<sup>3</sup> of death : *I pray thee*, come and lay thy hands on her, that she may be healed; and she shall live.<sup>4</sup>  
 24 And *Jesus* went with him; and much people followed him, and thronged him.  
 25 And a certain woman,<sup>5</sup> which had an issue of blood twelve

<sup>1</sup> by the sea<sup>2</sup> beseeching him much<sup>3</sup> is at the point<sup>4</sup> that she may be made whole, and live<sup>5</sup> And a woman

## VII.—FIFTH SOJOURN IN CAPERNAUM.

1 and 2. *The daughter of Jairus, and the sick woman*, v. 21-43 :

Matt. ix. 1, 18-26; Luke viii. 40-56.

21. **Unto the other side.** To the side on which Capernaum, "His own city" (Matt. ix. 1), was situated, *i.e.* to the western side.

**Unto him.** The words really mean that the people came pressing close upon Jesus, crowding and thronging upon Him as soon as He left the boat. The people of Capernaum could see the boat when it left Gergesa, they waited for it anxiously, and pressed eagerly on Jesus when He landed, some because Jesus had healed them and they were grateful, others, like Jairus, because they anxiously looked for Him to help them. There was to be no rest for Him, the crowds meant more work, and Jesus was ready at once to go about His Father's business.

22. **Rulers of the synagogue.** Each synagogue (congregation) had a college of elders, or kirk-session, who conducted or superintended the worship and exercised discipline.

**Jairus.** Same name as Jair (Judg. x. 3). He had been to Christ before, when with his colleagues he had pled for the Roman centurion who had built the synagogue. Now on his own account he falls on his knees in Oriental fashion, and bends his forehead towards Christ's feet till it touches the ground.

23. **My little daughter.** Twelve years old and an *only* daughter (Luke viii. 42); she lay a-dying, all but dead (Matt. ix. 18); in despairing faith the father had left her bedside. The young man at Nain was an *only* son: Lazarus was an *only* brother.

24. **A great multitude followed.** For had He not pledged Himself to raise the dead or the dying?

25. **A certain woman.** "Such overflowing grace is in Him the Prince of life, that as He was hastening to accomplish one work of grace and power, He accomplishes another, as by the way. His *obiter*, in Fuller's words, is to more purpose than our *iter*" (Trench, p. 188).

**An issue of blood.** The disease unfitted her for all the relationships of life, it made her ceremonially unclean, her touch made the person touched unclean (Lev. xv. 25-27), and the people believed that it was a direct consequence of sinful deeds. So she came secretly. She had lived for twelve

26 years, and had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but 27 rather grew worse, when she had heard of Jesus,<sup>1</sup> came in the 28 press<sup>2</sup> behind, and touched his garment. For she said,<sup>3</sup> If I 29 may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole.<sup>4</sup> And straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up; and she felt in 30 *her* body that she was healed of that plague.<sup>5</sup> And Jesus, immediately knowing in himself that virtue had gone out of him,<sup>6</sup> turned him about in the press,<sup>2</sup> and said, Who touched

<sup>1</sup> having heard the things concerning Jesus

<sup>2</sup> crowd

<sup>3</sup> For she kept saying

<sup>4</sup> made whole

<sup>5</sup> her plague

<sup>6</sup> And straightway Jesus, perceiving in himself that the power *proceeding* from him had gone forth

years in solitude, for she could go to no social gathering, to no synagogue service, and she was oppressed by the knowledge that her neighbours thought her a sinful woman justly punished, once rich in friends and in money. She is now poor, ill, and companionless.

**Twelve years.** Her misery was as old as Jairus' daughter.

26. **Had suffered.** The word denotes passive experience of pain (Matt. xvi. 21), and of pain that had come from the cures and not from the disease.

27. **Having heard.** She had learned what Christ had *done*, and His deeds had made her believe that He was full of Divine power, and as loving as powerful.

**In the press.** Through the crushing, pushing throng as only a weak woman or a child could do.

**Behind.** She approached from behind and touched the tassel of His outer robe which hung over His shoulder, thinking to steal a miracle for herself. The tassel had a certain sacred significance. She seems to have thought that Christ's miracles were a natural and not a gracious outgoing of power.

**Garment.** *Hem of His garment* (Matt. ix. 20); "*border*" (Luke viii. 44). The hem or border was the fringe or tassel, or "ribbon of blue," which the law of Moses (Num. xv. 37-40; Deut. xxii. 12) commanded every Jew to wear at each corner of his *tallith* or cloak. Those who wished to be thought very religious enlarged the *borders* of their garments (Matt. xxiii. 5).

28. **For she said, i.e. kept saying.** The woman, once healthy and wealthy, now diseased and poor, secretly believing in the power of Christ to heal her, kept saying to herself, "If I but," etc., to keep her faith up to the point of touching. "Christ's patients are often trembling when they have cause to be triumphant" (Matt. Henry). Christ is the Saviour for secret suffering and silent sighs.

29. **Plague, or scourge.** The word means (1) *whip* or scourge (Acts xxii. 24); (2) *disease* of body. At the touch she is cured, the Great Physician has healed where others failed; she steps back thankful, hoping only to get away unobserved; but she is arrested as instantly as she is healed.

30. **Who touched.** There may have been superstition mingling with the woman's faith, and Christ meant to bring her to avowal for her good. Imperfect and yet true faith often underlies a superstitious use of means, but Christ likes to guide to a higher faith. "If He allowed her to go away

31 my clothes? And his disciples said unto him, Thou seest the multitude thronging thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me?  
 32 And he looked round about to see her that had done this  
 33 thing. But the woman fearing and trembling, knowing what was done in her,<sup>1</sup> came and fell down before him, and told  
 34 him all the truth. And he said unto her, Daughter, thy faith

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<sup>1</sup> what had been done to her

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undetected, the healing filched, as it were, unconsciously from the Healer, this fancy might be confirmed, the superstitious element in her faith enhanced. Therefore it was that He would not suffer the secrecy" (Hanna). Our Lord not only heals but educates. He let her and every one else there, and all since who read the story, know what was the kind of touch that had wrought the cure, what was the connection between her and Him that had brought her relief. It was not that He did not sympathize with the modesty of the shrinking, delicate woman, nor that He did not know the pain it would be to her to be the gazing-stock of the crowd, but this would become a sweet sorrow from the new joy and knowledge that came to her with the words, "Thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace."

31. **His disciples.** *Peter and they that were with Him*, Luke tells us; Peter speaking first with characteristic impetuosity.

**Thronging thee.** "Many throng Him, but only one touches." "The flesh presses, faith touches." Her touch was different from all other touching. She got her blessing because between her disease and Christ's power there was her touch of faith, the bridge between the two. Her hand touched His garment. Her faith touched His divine and saving power. "Many throng Jesus: His in name, near to Him: in actual contact with the sacraments and ordinances of His church; yet not touching Him, because not drawing nigh in faith" (Trench). "Amidst the pressure of thousands the Lord perceives the silent and gentle touch of a single believer" (Lange). One touch of real faith is better than a thousand professions.

32. **He looked round about.** He turned round, for the tassel she touched hung down over His shoulder, and His eye wandered over the faces of the crowd till it fell on hers; trembling she fell before Him and told Him all; the long illness, the helplessness of physicians, the loss of fortune, her faith and resolve: "We must not be ashamed to own secret transactions between Christ and our souls" (Matt. Henry).

33. **Fearing and trembling.** For she, an unclean woman, had touched a holy Rabbi, and had made Him ceremonially unclean until evening, an almost unpardonable crime.

**Told him all the truth.** It was easier to tell after she had got the blessing, and our Lord asked her to confess *when* confession was easiest. He could not altogether spare her the pain of confession, for that was necessary to lead her into the way; but He spared her as much as He could. The shame which made her wish to remain in concealment was natural enough, but in this crisis of her spiritual life it had to be overcome, and the Lord helped her to overcome it, and to make the overcoming easy for her. She would have missed the blessing of personal communion with Jesus the Healer, had she not been enabled to overcome it.

34. **Daughter.** The only time Christ so addresses a woman. He speaks

hath made thee whole ; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague.

- 35 While he yet spake, there came from the ruler of the synagogue's *house certain* which said,<sup>1</sup> Thy daughter is dead :  
 36 why troublest thou the Master any further? As soon as  
 37 Jesus heard the word that was spoken,<sup>2</sup> he saith unto the ruler of the synagogue, Be not afraid, only believe. And he

<sup>1</sup> they came from the ruler of the synagogue's *house*, saying

<sup>2</sup> But Jesus, not heeding the word spoken, *or* overhearing the word spoken

to her as He spoke to the paralytic (ii. 5). Both had seized their deliverance by force ; the man entered through the roof in robber fashion, the woman came stealthily, forcing down her feminine fears and natural modesty. Tradition says that this woman was Veronica, and that it was she who gave our Lord the handkerchief to wipe His face on the way to Calvary, which afterwards was seen to be impressed with a portrait of Jesus.

**Thy faith.** Faith, the right hand of the soul which lays hold on the Saviour and His righteousness, drew her out of her impurity, and brought her in a new life ; not the outward act of touching the tassel.

**Go in peace.** *Enter into peace.* A timid, trembling touch of Him not only brought forth the healing power that was in Him, but gained this entrance into peace in which she was henceforth to live. "After a long-continued sorrow, a lasting blessing" (Bengel). "There is not one of all our Saviour's many miracles of healing fuller of comfort and encouragement. For if His mode of dealing with our spiritual diseases be shadowed out in the modes of the bodily cures that He effected, whenever we grow sad or despondent as we think how much of fear, or shame, or error, or weakness, or superstition mingles with the faith we cherish, then let us remember that . . . He who accepted this woman's faith with all its weakening and defiling ingredients will not cast us off" (Hanna).

35. **Why troublest.** *Do not worry the Rabbi.* The whole phrase suggests ceremonious politeness. The word translated "to trouble" means (1) *to flay*, (2) *to fatigue by length of journey*, (3) *to harass or worry*. Why add an irksome task to the laborious work of the Great Teacher? "There were more manners than faith in the phrase. Infidelity is all for ease, and thinks every good work tedious" (Hall). But there is a love that is stronger than death, and Jairus was to know its power.

36. **Heard the word,** R. V. *not heeding*, or (in the margin) *overhearing*. Jairus must have felt impatient at the delay. His little daughter lay a-dying, and this woman not nearly so ill first comes and touches Christ, and then puts off time by telling Him her case, and now all is over. Jesus hastened to comfort him. He is not to lose by another's gain. "We have as much occasion for the grace of God when death is in the house as when sickness is" (Matt. Henry).

**Be not afraid : only believe.** Fear and faith are coupled together here by Christ, and the faith is to cast out the fear. Jairus had asked Jesus to save his daughter's life while she still lived ; he is promised the life after it has been overcome by death. For Christ answers us not according to our petitions, but according to our needs. His mercy is always greater than we can ask or conceive.



suffered no man to follow him, save Peter, and James, and  
 38 John the brother of James. And he cometh<sup>1</sup> to the house  
 of the ruler of the synagogue, and seeth the tumult, and them  
 39 that wept and wailed greatly.<sup>2</sup> And when he was come in,  
 he saith unto them, Why make ye this ado,<sup>3</sup> and weep? the  
 40 damsel is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed him to  
 scorn. But when he had put them all out, he taketh the  
 father and the mother of the damsel, and them that were with  
 41 him, and entereth in where the damsel was lying. And he  
 took the damsel by the hand, and said unto her, Talitha

<sup>1</sup> they came<sup>2</sup> and he beholdeth a tumult, and *many* weeping and wailing greatly<sup>3</sup> Why make ye a tumult

37. **Peter, James, and John.** This is the first time we read of the selection of these three. They were to enjoy still closer intimacy, for they were to be Christ's chosen companions at the transfiguration (Matt. xvii. 1), and at the agony in Gethsemane (Matt. xxvi. 37). The longer they abode with Christ, and the nearer they came to Him, the more their souls opened to the inflow of His Spirit.

38. **Cometh to the house.** A word spoken where He was, might have cured the maiden; but Jesus Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses (Matt. viii. 17). He laid His hand on the sick, and went Himself to the house of mourning. His miracles were manifestations of love as well as of power, of sympathy as well as of wisdom. They are ways of showing us that when we do in faith touch the hand of omnipotence, it is a hand of love that we feel outstretched to meet ours.

**Seeth the tumult.** The word commonly denotes the confused noise of an excited public assembly, and here means the wailing raised partly by relatives, but principally by hired women-mourners. The Jews, like other Eastern nations, hired professional mourners whose duty it was to indulge in signs of grief; to "beat on their breasts," to utter loud groans, and to shed forced tears (Luke viii. 52-54; Amos v. 16). "There are in every city and community women exceedingly skilful in this business. They are always sent for and kept in readiness. When a fresh group of sympathizers comes in, these women 'make haste' to take up a wailing that the newly come may the more easily unite their tears with the mourners" (Thomson, *Land and Book*, p. 103).

39. **Sleepeth.** So of Lazarus: *Our friend Lazarus is fallen asleep: but I go that I may awaken him out of sleep.* Sleep, the twin-brother of death. Death and sleep are alike to Jesus; and death is to Him what sleep is to others; for He can wake the dead. "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also that are fallen asleep in Jesus will God bring with Him," etc. (1 Thess. iv. 14-18).

40. **Put them all out.** Only the real mourners were to be comforted, only those who trusted were to see the miracle of faith. The eyes of those who utterly derided Him were not worthy of the honour. Faithlessness keeps us from seeing many a manifestation of the glory of God, and renders us incapable of secret fellowship with the Saviour.

cumi; which is, being interpreted, Damsel, I say unto thee,  
 42 arise. And straightway the damsel arose, and walked; for  
 she was *of the age* of twelve years. And they were astonished  
 43 with a great astonishment.<sup>1</sup> And he charged them straitly  
 that no man should know it; and commanded that something  
 should be given her to eat.

CHAP. VI. 1 And he went out from thence, and came into his  
 2 own country; and his disciples follow him. And when the  
 sabbath day was come, he began to teach in the synagogue:  
 and many hearing *him* were astonished, saying, From whence

<sup>1</sup> And they were amazed straightway with a great amazement.

41. **Talitha cumi.** Introduction, pp. 28, 34. Mark tells us the very words Jesus used. *Talitha* in the ordinary speech of the people was a term of endearment to a little girl. "Little maid, arise;" in Scotch, "My wee lassie, get up." See how tenderly Jesus acts. He turned out the noisy crowd lest the child should be frightened on waking at the wailing; He took her by the hand; He spoke the very word her mother used to wake her in the morning; He understood "how sweet to her young fresh appetite after the long abstinence of illness, would be 'something to eat.' Even the child's mother was not so motherly as Jesus" (Morison).

42. **The damsel arose.** Christ raised the dead from the bed, from the bier, and from the grave (Luke vii. 14; John xi. 44). He did it that all mourning parents might weep the less. Jesus will one day lay His mighty hand upon the children who have died and raise them. He is as able and as willing to help now as He was then, to take us by the hand and raise our soul from the death of sin.

**They were astonished.** Mark is careful to note the effect on the witnesses of the miracle. For other examples, see i. 27, ii. 12, iv. 41, vi. 51, vii. 37.

43. **That no man should know it.** This injunction to secrecy is again repeated, although only five saw the miracle; and again the deed cannot be hid. Jesus did not wish the miracle to be perpetually hid, but He seems to have desired to repress the excitement immediately following these wonderful displays of power, which dulled the vision of grace and manifestation of glory, and fostered such belief in natural magical power as marred the faith of the woman with the issue.

**That something should be given her to eat.** Christ's miracles do not take us away beyond the bounds of ordinary everyday life. The command, or rather suggestion, for the word *command* is too strong, marks the return from the supernatural to the natural and the commonplace. They are the ordinary providence of God made visible when God incarnate walked visibly among men.

#### VIII.—FIFTH PREACHING JOURNEY IN GALILEE, VI. 1-29.

1. *The second rejection at Nazareth*, vi. 1-6: Matt. xiii. 54-58.

VI. 1. **Into his own country.** *His fatherland.* Nazareth, where He had been brought up, a district comparatively quiet as compared with the densely-crowded region about the lake.

hath this *man* these things? and what wisdom *is* this which is given unto him, that even such mighty works are wrought  
3 by his hands?<sup>1</sup> Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Judas, and Simon?

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<sup>1</sup> What is the wisdom that is given unto this man, and what mean such mighty works wrought by his hands?

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2. Whence hath this man these things?—that is, the *wisdom* and the *works*. For Jesus had never been educated to be a scribe, and His countrymen knew it.

**Mighty works**; literally, *powers* (R. V. margin). The Evangelists use four different words—*wonders*, *signs*, *powers* or *mighty works*, and *works*—to express what we mean by *miracle*. (1) *Wonder*, which transfers the astonishment of the beholder to the thing seen and done, is never used alone, always along with *sign*: “And shall show signs and wonders” (Mark xiii. 22). (2) *Sign* implies that a miracle is a wonder with a meaning in it, and that every miracle is a sermon. *Sign* is frequently used by John. It occurs in Mark xvi. 17: “And these *signs* shall follow them that believe,” and in Mark xvi. 20: “The Lord working with them, and confirming the word by the *signs* that followed.” (3) *Powers* implies that the deeds are the results of the great power of God. The word occurs frequently in Mark (v. 30 (*virtue*), vi. 2, vi. 14, ix. 39). (4) *Works* is the favourite phrase of St. John (vi. 28, vii. 21, x. 25, xiv. 11).

3. **The carpenter**; in Matt. xiii. 55, *the carpenter's son*. The village carpenter in our Lord's time held the position of the modern village blacksmith. Almost all agricultural instruments—ploughs, harrows, yokes, etc.—were made of wood. His workshop was the centre of the village life. “He who built heaven and earth, became in His humiliation a carpenter” (Cannstein). Our Lord worked at a handicraft, and has made all honest labour honourable. “That Jesus did in fact spring from the labouring class of the population, is confirmed by the language of His discourses and parables, which everywhere refer to the antecedents and relations of the ordinary workman's life, and betray a knowledge of it which no one could have gained merely by observation. He was at home in those poor, windowless, Syrian hovels in which the housewife had to light a candle in the daytime to seek for her lost piece of silver (Luke xv. 8): He was acquainted with the secrets of the bakehouse (Matt. xiii. 33, xvi. 6; Luke xiii. 21), of the gardener (Matt. xv. 13), and the builder (Luke vi. 49), and with things which the upper classes never see—as ‘the good measure pressed down and shaken together running over’ of the corn-chandler (Luke vi. 38); the rotten, leaking wine-skin of the wine-dealer (Matt. ix. 17); the patchwork of the peasant woman (Matt. ix. 16); the brutal manners of the upper servants to the lower (Luke xii. 45),—these and a hundred other features of a similar kind are interwoven by Him into His parables. Reminiscences even of His more special handicraft have been found, it is believed, in His sayings. The parable of the splinter and the beam is said to recall the carpenter's shop (Matt. vii. 3); the uneven foundations of the houses, the building yard (Matt. vii. 24); the cubit which is added, the workshop (Matt. vi. 27); and the distinction in the appearance of the green and dry wood, the drying-shed (Luke xxiii. 31)” (Hausrath).

**The brother**, iii. 31.

and are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended  
 4 at him. But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without  
 honour, but<sup>1</sup> in his own country, and among his own kin,  
 5 and in his own house. And he could there do no mighty  
 work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and  
 6 healed *them*. And he marvelled because of their unbelief.

And he went round about the villages, teaching.

7 And he called *unto him* the twelve, and began to send  
 them forth by two and two; and gave them power<sup>2</sup> over  
 8 unclean spirits; and commanded them<sup>3</sup> that they should

<sup>1</sup> save

<sup>2</sup> authority

<sup>3</sup> and he charged them

**Offended at him.** Christ's humiliation has been to many a stone of stumbling, and yet it was necessary for our salvation.

4. **A prophet, etc.** A proverb like our "Familiarity breeds contempt" (Luke iv. 24). Each prophet is set (1) in a family, (2) in the wider circle of kinsfolk, (3) in the still wider circle of fatherland or district where he was brought up.

5. **He could there do no.** Christ's miracles were not works of magic, they required faith. "Unbelief and contempt of Christ stop the current of His favours" (Matt. Henry). Faith, which is the love that *receives*, is needed to make us share God's grace, which is the love that *imparts*. The door was shut upon the Saviour by the people's impiety.

6. **He marvelled.** "Our Lord does not marvel at other human things generally, but He does marvel on the one hand at faith, when, as in the case of the centurion, it overcomes in its grandeur all human hindrances, and on the other at unbelief, when it can, in the face of numerous divine manifestations, harden itself into a wilful rejection of Himself" (Maclear).

## 2. *The mission of the Twelve Apostles, vi. 6-13: Matt. x.*

**And he went round,** begins a new paragraph.

7. **The twelve, and began to send them.** Matthew connects this deed with Christ's thought that the multitudes were like sheep without shepherds. The Twelve are to be trained to be shepherds. Perhaps also there is the thought that Herod, who has slain John, may stop the preaching of Jesus, and other preachers are needed.

**Two and two.** Mark alone mentions the fact, but Matthew (x. 2-4) and Luke (vi. 14-16) name the apostles in pairs. This is an "undesigned coincidence."

8. **Commanded them.** See Matt. x. 5-42 for the full charge. This charge is quite different from that addressed to the seventy who were appointed to go to towns and villages which their Master was about to visit, and herald His approach. It is a scheme of mission work partly intended for the present, and partly prophetic of the future. The mission-field was to be the lost sheep of *the house of Israel*; the theme of their preaching, the nearness of the kingdom; their credentials, the power of working miracles, even to the raising of the dead; their equipment, the ordinary dress of a Galilean peasant on a journey; and a description is given of their manner of approach to, and behaviour in, houses and towns. The future of the Church is foreshadowed in the mission, character, and work of the apostles, who, in wise harmlessness, are to go forth into the cruel world: persecution awaits them, but they

take nothing for *their* journey, save a staff only; no scrip,<sup>1</sup>  
 9 no bread, no money in *their* purse:<sup>2</sup> but *be* shod with  
 10 sandals; and not put on two coats. And he said unto them,  
 In what place soever<sup>3</sup> ye enter into an house, there abide  
 11 until ye depart from that place. And whosoever<sup>4</sup> shall not  
 receive you, nor hear you, when ye depart thence, shake off  
 the dust under your feet for a testimony against them.<sup>5</sup> Verily  
 I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and  
 12 Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city. And  
 13 they went out, and preached that men should repent. And  
 they cast out many devils, and anointed with oil many that  
 were sick, and healed *them*.

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<sup>1</sup> wallet      <sup>2</sup> in their girdle      <sup>3</sup> wheresoever      <sup>4</sup> And whatsoever place

<sup>5</sup> and they hear you not, as ye go forth thence shake off the dust that is under your feet for a testimony unto them

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have the consolation that the Father's power and wisdom accompany them, and in the end will bring them the reward of the faithful; cross-bearing awaits them, and separation from all that earth counts dear, but their losses on earth are gains in heaven; and their reward is that their work shall not be fruitless. Mark gives only the first portion of the charge, the instructions for their immediate work.

**Except a staff only.** If they had a staff, they were to take it; if they had not, they were not to provide one (Matt. x. 10).

**Scrip.** A bag slung over the shoulder, a wallet, made in Syria of a kid's skin stripped off whole, and tanned (1 Sam. xvii. 40).

**Purse; lit. money belt.** The purse, however, was usually only a fold in the tunic hanging over the girdle.

The whole of the directions imply that the disciples were to go on their journey without preparation, as the ordinary Galilean peasant went (Thomson, *Land and Book*, pp. 346-357).

**9. With sandals.** Matthew says *neither shoes*. The shoe was of a softer, the sandal of a harder, leather. The sandal was a piece of thick, tough leather, roughly the shape of the sole of the foot, but larger every way; holes were pierced all round the edges, and laces were attached, by which the sandal was tied on to the foot. It was meant to be a protection in walking over rough ground or in thorny paths.

**10. There abide.** As Lydia entreated Paul to do: "If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house *and abide there*" (Acts xvi. 15).

**11. Shake off the dust,** as Paul did at Antioch in Pisidia (Acts xiii. 51), and at Corinth (Acts xviii. 6). It was a common Jewish mode of expressing renunciation or excommunication, or "no better than heathen." Mark uses the simple word *earth* or *soil*, Matthew and Luke say *dust*.

**For Sodom and Gomorrha.** Compare our Lord's warning to Capernaum (Matt. xi. 24).

**12. That men should repent.** Their whole preaching had for its end the awakening to conviction of sin, sorrow for sin, and the showing sorrow in honest endeavour after new obedience; and this ought to be the theme of all preaching.

**13. Anointed with oil.** This was a common practice among Jewish

- 14 And king Herod heard *of him*; (for his name was spread abroad :)<sup>1</sup> and he said, That John the Baptist was risen from the dead, and therefore mighty works do show forth themselves in him.<sup>2</sup> Others said, That it is Elias. And others, 15 That it is a prophet, or as one of the prophets. But when 16 Herod heard *thereof*, he said, It is John, whom I beheaded : 17 he is risen from the dead.<sup>3</sup> For Herod himself had sent

<sup>1</sup> for his name had become known

<sup>2</sup> do these powers work in him

<sup>3</sup> But Herod, when he heard thereof, said, John, whom I beheaded, he is risen

physicians. "They used an ordinary medicine, and obtained an extraordinary and infallible effect" (Lightfoot). There is no evidence that our Lord used any such instrumentality in His miraculous cures. He healed by a word or by a touch.

3. *The murder of the Baptist*, 14-29 : Matt. xiv. 1-12 ; Luke ix. 7-9.

14. King Herod was Herod Antipas, who was tetrarch, *i.e.* ruler over a fourth part of his father's kingdom. Herod the Great (Matt. ii. 1) had ten wives and fifteen children. Four children are mentioned in the Bible: Archelaus (Matt. ii. 22), and *Herod Antipas* (Matt. xiv. 1 ; Mark vi. 14 ; Luke iii. 1, ix. 7, xiii. 31, xxiii. 7), sons of Malthakè, a Samaritan ; Philip (Matt. xiv. 3 ; Mark vi. 17 ; Luke iii. 19), son of Mariamne, the daughter of Simon the high priest ; and Herod Philip, son of Cleopatra (Luke iii. 1). Aristobulus, another son not mentioned in Scripture, was the father of the Herod mentioned in Acts xii., and of *Herodias*. Herodias married (1) her uncle Philip, the son of Mariamne, and (2) Herod Antipas. The marriage was unlawful in three ways : (1) Herod's wife was still living ; (2) Herodias' husband was still living ; (3) it was a marriage between uncle and niece. Herod Antipas was banished to Gaul in 39 A.D., Herodias followed him, and both died in exile. See table of Herod family, pp. 58, 59.

**Therefore do mighty works.** Because he had risen, Herod thought he must have more power. John had not done miracles while alive (John x. 41).

15. **It is Elias.** *Elijah*, according to the prophecy of Mal. iv. 5, was expected to appear to herald the approach of the kingdom.

**That it is a prophet, or as one of the prophets.** These were the rumours of the people that gathered round the expressed thought of Herod. Some declared that Jesus was Elijah, who was not merely a prophet, but, according to current opinion, the great forerunner ; others did not think so highly of Jesus, and said that He was one of the old prophets risen from the dead, Jeremiah perhaps (Matt. xvi. 14) ; while others merely declared that this new teacher was a man *like* the old prophets.

16. **It is John.** News reached the court of Herod that a great preacher was stirring the people in Galilee. "A palace is late in hearing spiritual news" (Bengel). The tetrarch's guilty conscience at once remembered John. The words in the original, *John whom I myself* ("the pronoun has the emphasis of a guilty conscience," Meyer) *beheaded—this is he—he is risen*, in their abruptness denote speech influenced by superstitious fears and stings of conscience. "He feared John when he lived, and now fears him ten times worse when he is dead" (Matt. Henry).

forth and laid hold upon John, and bound him in prison for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife : for he had married  
 18 her. For John had said unto Herod, It is not lawful for thee  
 19 to have thy brother's wife. Therefore Herodias had a quarrel  
 against him, and would have killed him ;<sup>1</sup> but she could not :  
 20 for Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just<sup>2</sup> man and  
 an holy, and observed him ;<sup>3</sup> and when he heard him, he did  
 21 many things, and heard him gladly.<sup>4</sup> And when a convenient  
 day was come, that Herod on his birthday made a supper  
 22 to his lords, high captains, and chief *estates* of Galilee ; and  
 when the daughter of the said Herodias came in, and danced,

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<sup>1</sup> And Herodias set herself against him, and desired to kill him

<sup>2</sup> righteous

<sup>3</sup> and kept him safe

<sup>4</sup> and when he heard him, he was much perplexed ; and he heard him gladly

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17. **Herodias.** She is the New Testament Jezebel, as the weak, fickle Herod Antipas is the New Testament Ahab.

18. **John had said.** It was dangerous to offend Herod, but more dangerous to offend God by not reproofing sin. "If we seek to please men further than is for their spiritual good, we are not the servants of God" (Matt. Henry). 1 Kings xxi. 19.

19. **Would have killed,** *had a settled wish to kill.*

20. **Herod feared John.** John did not fear Herod. "There may be the terror of a strong conviction where there is not the truth of a saving conversion" (Matt. Henry). Matthew (xiv. 5) says Herod feared the people. The two passages show the weak, vacillating character of the king, now fearing John and desirous to protect him, now fearing Herodias and anxious to kill him, and always fearing the people till a drunken fit put courage in him to brave all and please his vindictive, resolute wife.

**Observed ;** rather, *conserved* ; Revised Version, *kept him safe*.

**Heard him gladly,** as Felix heard Paul (Acts xxiv. 24).

**Did many things.** His conscience was touched, and he tried to make a bargain with it by doing many good deeds he would not otherwise have done ; but he did not do the *one* thing—put away his brother's wife.

21. **Convenient,** for Herodias to carry out her plot against John.

**Birthday.** The Jews disapproved of such "keeping of birthdays," because they thought it part of idolatrous worship. The Herodian princes imitated the Roman emperors in this and other matters.

22. **Daughter of Herodias . . . danced.** Salome, daughter of Philip. She married afterwards—(1) Herod Philip the tetrarch ; (2) Aristobulus, king of Chalcis. "A luxurious feast of the period was not regarded as complete unless it closed with some gross pantomimic representation ; and doubtless Herod had adopted the evil fashion of his day. But he had not anticipated for his guests the rare luxury of seeing a princess—his own niece, a grand-daughter of Herod the Great and of Mariamne, a descendant therefore of the great line of Maccabean princes—a princess who afterwards became the wife of a tetrarch and the mother of a king—honouring them by degrading herself into a scenic dancer" (Farrar).

and pleased Herod and them that sat with him, the king said unto the damsel, Ask of me whatsoever thou wilt, and I will  
 23 give *it* thee. And he sware unto her, Whatsoever thou shalt ask of me, I will give *it* thee, unto the half of my kingdom.  
 24 And she went forth, and said unto her mother, What shall I  
 25 ask? And she said, The head of John the Baptist. And she came in straightway with haste unto the king, and asked, saying, I will that thou give me by and by<sup>1</sup> in a charger the  
 26 head of John the Baptist. And the king was exceeding sorry; *yet* for his oath's sake, and for their sakes which sat  
 27 with him,<sup>2</sup> he would not reject her. And immediately the king sent an executioner,<sup>3</sup> and commanded his head to be  
 28 brought: and he went and beheaded him in the prison, and brought his head in a charger, and gave it to the damsel: and  
 29 the damsel gave it to her mother. And when his disciples heard *of it*, they came and took up his corpse, and laid it in a tomb.

<sup>1</sup> forthwith<sup>2</sup> but for the sake of his oaths and of them that sat at meat<sup>3</sup> straightway the king sent forth a soldier of his guard

23. Unto half my kingdom. Oriental magniloquence, said with some dignity by Ahasuerus (Esth. v. 3, vii. 2), but in one without supreme power it was idle and boastful enough; for Herod was only tetrarch by permission of Rome, and when he afterwards begged permission to call himself king, he was banished to Gaul for presumption.

25. Charger, a large dish; that on which anything is *laid*. The Old English "charge," to load, is still used of guns.

26. Exceeding sorry. The Greek word is used of the rich young ruler (Luke xviii. 23), and of our Lord in Gethsemane (Mark xiv. 34). Herod was perhaps troubled in conscience; he certainly feared the people, and besides it was deemed unlucky to cause death on one's birthday. The Herods were all superstitious. The devil is remorseless to his servants. Herod is horrified, but the code of honour must be obeyed.

27. A soldier of his guard. The word in the original is *speculator*, one of the Latin words peculiar to Mark. See Introduction, p. 34.

In prison. Herod Antipas' first wife was the daughter of Aretas. She fled to her father; and the divorce caused a war in which in the end Herod was thoroughly defeated, the rout being regarded by the Jews as a punishment for the Baptist's murder. Josephus tells us that John was imprisoned in Machærus, Herod's *black fortress* on the rocky shores of the Dead Sea. It is likely that Herod was there near the frontier, superintending preparations for the campaign; and his absence from Galilee may account for his not hearing of Jesus until after the Baptist's death, and also the delay in the tidings of the death reaching Galilee.



30 And the apostles gathered themselves together unto Jesus, and told him all things, both what<sup>1</sup> they had done, and what<sup>1</sup>  
 31 they had taught. And he said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while: for there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so  
 32 much as to eat. And they departed into a desert place by

<sup>1</sup> whatsoever

### IX.—SIXTH SOJOURN IN CAPERNAUM, vi. 30.

#### *The return of the Apostles, 30.*

30. Apostles. The only instance in which Mark uses the word. They came to tell Jesus what they had done. Another company of disciples came also (Matt. xiv. 12). The disciples of John came to tell Him of their master's death. "It reminded Him of *another murder* that should be committed. Yet it is because of that death that a place in glory was ready for John, and is ready for every other 'faithful witness' like him (Col. i. 12-14)" (Stock). Jesus knew what the "leaven of the Pharisees and of Herod" (Matt. xvii. 12) would bring forth in the end; but His time was not yet come. Here begin, therefore, His journeys of flight. He left Capernaum, within Herod's dominions, and crossed the lake into those of Philip.

### III.—YEAR OF OPPOSITION, vi. 30-X. 52.

#### A.—PERIOD OF SECLUSION IN GALILEE—JOURNEYS OF FLIGHT.

##### *From the Passover to Feast of Tabernacles, six months.*

#### I.—FIRST JOURNEY OF FLIGHT, vi. 30-56.

##### 1. *Retirement to a desert place—Feeding of the five thousand*, vi. 30-44:

Matt. xiv. 13-21; Luke ix. 10-17; John vi. 1-14.

31. Come ye yourselves apart. Was this a journey of flight, or only one in search of rest after labours? It is somewhat difficult to say: *probably* a journey of flight, when we remember how, before the Pharisees had taken counsel with the Herodians to slay Jesus, He had known of the plot; and now He knew that Herod, the patron of those Herodians, who had slain John, was inquiring after Him.

32. Desert place, near Bethsaida (Luke ix. 10). This place of retirement has presented some difficulties. Mark tells us simply that it was a desert place, to which our Lord and His disciples went by boat. Luke tells us that it was a desert place belonging to the city of Bethsaida (there are great variations in the MSS., but the best reading undoubtedly has the words *city of Bethsaida*). On the other hand, Mark says that *after* the miracle the disciples were sent across the sea to Bethsaida; and it is said that John (vi. 23) declares that the place where the miracle was wrought was near Tiberias. There must, therefore, have been two places called Bethsaida, or the text of the Gospels has been corrupted. Critics who assert that there was only one Bethsaida, point out that in the Sinaitic MS. the words in Luke ix. 10, *belonging to the city of Bethsaida*, are omitted, and that the verse in John reads, "When, therefore, the boats came from Tiberias, which was nigh unto the place where they did eat bread." The one Bethsaida is therefore Bethsaida Julias, to which

- 33 ship privately.<sup>1</sup> And the people saw them departing, and many knew him,<sup>2</sup> and ran afoot thither out of all cities, and  
 34 outwent them, and came together unto him. And Jesus, when he came out, saw much people, and was moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd: and he began to teach them many things.  
 35 And when the day was now far spent, his disciples came unto him, and said, This is a desert place, and now the time

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<sup>1</sup> And they went away in the boat to a desert place apart.

<sup>2</sup> *them*

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the disciples crossed from near Tiberias, where the miracle took place. There are, however, very grave difficulties connected with this view. The readings of the Sinaitic MS. have not been received either in Luke ix. 10 or in John vi. 23. There was a Bethsaida of Galilee (John xii. 21), which could not have been Bethsaida Julias; and Luke ix. 10 speaks of a Bethsaida on one side of the lake, while Mark vi. 45 refers to a Bethsaida on the other. We may therefore conclude that there were two Bethsайдas: one in Galilee, the other in Gaulonitis. The latter is meant here. This Bethsaida (fish-town) was enlarged and adorned by Herod Philip shortly after the birth of Christ, and called by him Julias in honour of the emperor's daughter.

**33. Ran afoot.** It was Passover time, and the roads were full of people (John vi. 4). They went round the north side of the lake, crossing the Jordan. "He who is in earnest to go to Christ will let no trouble hinder him."

**34. Came out,** perhaps *out of the boat*, but more probably Jesus had landed and had gone up one of the hill-sides (John vi. 3) to a quiet place. The people gathered; He came forth to them, taught them, and healed the sick (Luke ix. 11). The Lord sacrificed for men His retirement.

**Moved with compassion.** Mark alone records the thoughts of Christ on the occasion, imparted perhaps to Peter, and communicated by him to the evangelist.

**As sheep not having a shepherd.** The country where they were was not merely unenclosed, but was full of rugged, dangerous defiles, the abode of wild animals, bare of pasture. This must be remembered to understand the full meaning of the metaphor.

**35. His disciples.** Comparing the various passages, the course of events seems to have been:—(1) Jesus taught and healed; then (2) He asked Philip, *Whence shall we buy bread that these may eat?* Philip had not the faith to accept the partnership in a miracle which the word "we" invited him to, and answered (3) that two hundred pence would not buy bread enough (John vi. 5-7); (4) our Lord went on teaching and healing; (5) at even the apostles asked Him to send the multitudes away; (6) He asked them to feed them; (7) they answered as Philip had done; (8) He told them to go and see what bread could be had; a boy offers what he had; and (9) Andrew brought it to Jesus.

**When the day was far spent.** *When it was evening*, Matthew says (xiv. 15). There were two evenings in the Jewish day, and a space of time probably between three o'clock and five o'clock was called "between the evenings." From Matthew it can be gathered that the disciples asked Jesus to send the multitudes away about three o'clock, and that He ascended to the hill-top when all was over between five o'clock and six o'clock; see verse 47.

36 *is* far passed:<sup>1</sup> send them away, that they may go into the country round about, and into the villages, and buy themselves bread: for they have nothing to eat.<sup>2</sup> He answered and said unto them, Give ye them to eat. And they say unto him, Shall we go and buy two hundred pennyworth of bread, 38 and give them to eat? He saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? go and see. And when they knew, they say, 39 Five, and two fishes. And he commanded them to make all 40 sit down<sup>3</sup> by companies upon the green grass. And they sat 41 down in ranks,<sup>4</sup> by hundreds, and by fifties. And when he

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<sup>1</sup> The place is desert, and the day is now far spent

<sup>2</sup> and buy themselves somewhat to eat

<sup>3</sup> to recline

<sup>4</sup> in groups or *in garden-beds*

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36. Send them away. There was more charity than faith in the request. The disciples had their compassion also for the people; the crowd was on the desert side of the sea, in a rugged, desolate country, and the short Eastern twilight would soon be upon them. The famished multitude might come to harm. Their charity and compassion were rightly called into exercise. "Those preachers which are so intent on their spiritual work, that in the meantime they overstrain the weakness of their people, holding them in their devotions longer than human faith will permit, forget not themselves more than their pattern, and must be sent to school to these compassionate disciples who, when evening was come, sue to Christ for the people's dismissal" (Hall). It was their faith that was at fault.

37. Give ye them to eat. God sometimes asks us to do for Him more than we can, as when He commands us to keep His whole law, but always in order to show us how easy it is to rest on Himself. "As when the mother bids the infant come to her, which hath not yet the steady use of his legs, it is that he may cling the faster to her hand and clothes for support."

**Pennyworth.** A penny, *denarius*, was a day's wage of a labourer in Palestine (Matt. xx. 2). It was famine price for a measure of wheat (Rev. vi. 6). "It so happens that in almost every case where the word *denarius* occurs in the New Testament, it is connected with the idea of a liberal or large amount; and yet in these passages the English rendering names a sum which is absurdly small" (Bishop Lightfoot).

38. Five and two fishes. The loaves were barley-cakes (John vi. 9), and it was Andrew who had found the lad, a little boy (*paidarion*) who carried them in his basket-wallet. These barley-cakes were the food of the poor, and a barley-cake was a most insignificant thing (Judg. vii. 13). The fishes were small dried fish usually eaten as something tasty with the barley-bread. The five small cakes and the two fishes were the remains of the boy's day's provisions.

39. The green grass. "During the great part of the year there is not such a thing as a blade of *green grass* to be seen on the slopes that ascend from the eastern shores of the Sea of Tiberias; all the grass that remains is burned and scorched. But, as we learn from John, it was now spring-time, just before the passover" (John vi. 4) (Morison).

40. In ranks; literally, *in beds* (as of a garden), in groups. "As they sat

- had taken the five loaves and the two fishes, he looked up to heaven, and blessed, and brake the loaves, and gave *them* to his disciples to set before them; and the two fishes divided  
 42 he among them all. And they did all eat, and were filled.  
 43 And they took up twelve baskets full of the fragments, and of  
 44 the fishes. And they that did eat of the loaves were about five thousand men.  
 45 And straightway he constrained his disciples to get into the ship,<sup>1</sup> and to go to the other side before unto Bethsaida,

---

1 the boat

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in those orderly groups upon the grass, the gay red and blue and yellow colours of the clothing which the poorest Orientals wear, called up in the imagination of St. Peter a multitude of flower-beds in some well-cultivated garden" (Farrar).

**By hundreds and by fifties.** Each group consisted of two rows of 100, a shorter one of 50 persons. The fourth side remained open, as was the custom at the feasts of the ancients. There were twenty groups of 250. The women and children (Matt. xiv. 21), according to Oriental fashion, ate by themselves.

**41. Blessed.** It was Passover time, and these multitudes got their paschal feast in the wilderness with Christ. Our Lord blessed, brake, and distributed in the way that the father of the household did at the Passover feast. He who makes the corn seed bring forth sixtyfold, by the same creative power multiplied the bread. The multiplication of grain and of loaves are acts of the same omnipotence. Our Saviour supplied at once that creative force of nature which the farmer has to wait for, and which comes to his aid every year in the miracle of harvest.

**42. And were filled.** For Christ's love is as great as His power. None were forgotten, and all had enough. Jesus gave to the disciples, and they, keeping nothing to themselves, as freely handed to the people. Even Judas forgot to hoard.

**43. Baskets.** The word denotes the small wicker-basket in which each Jew carried his day's food to avoid pollution. The Jew was called "basket-carrier" by the Romans. At the feeding of the four thousand the basket was the large rope-basket. The presence of Christ will change a desert place into a paradise, and a place where there is no bread into a fruitful garden. This miracle is the only one related by each of the four evangelists. It is used by John as the text of Jesus' sermon on the Bread of Life (John vi. 22-65). John also records the effect on the people; they wished then and there to crown Jesus their Messiah King, and His refusal was a distinct crisis in His earthly ministry.

2. *Walking on the sea*, vi. 45-52: Matt. xiv. 22-33; John vi. 15-21.

**45. To Bethsaida.** The disciples started from the grassy narrow plain of *El Batliah* (or Butaiha), lying to the south of Bethsaida Julias, and their course was to Bethsaida of Galilee. They had rowed twenty-five or thirty furlongs (John vi. 19), and were about two-thirds across, "in the midst of the sea," when the squall came down on them out of the high gorge called the

46 while he sent away the people.<sup>1</sup> And when he had sent them  
 47 away,<sup>2</sup> he departed into a mountain<sup>3</sup> to pray. And when  
 even was come, the ship was in the midst of the sea, and he  
 48 alone on the land. And he saw them toiling<sup>4</sup> in rowing ; for

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<sup>1</sup> and to go before him unto the other side to Bethsaida, while he himself sendeth the multitude away

<sup>2</sup> And after he had taken leave of them      <sup>3</sup> the mountain      <sup>4</sup> distressed

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Valley of Doves, sweeping across the sea, blowing right on the stem of the ship. They were driven somewhat south, and landed at Gennesaret some miles below Bethsaida. See Map, p. 72.

46. **A mountain,** R. V. *the mountain*, the adjoining high land. The whole region is very hilly. "On the east side of the Sea of Galilee the banks are nearly 2000 feet high, destitute of verdure and of foliage, furrowed by ravines, but flat along the summit from which the plain of Bashan extends eastward" (Porter).

**To pray.** The picture given is a beautiful one. The disciples leave the shore in their boat to row across the lake ; the crowds gradually disperse, returning on foot, for the most part, across the plain to regain the western shore by going round the north margin of the lake. Jesus retires to the high ground to spend the calm Eastern night in solitary communion with His Father, in lonely prayer for the disciples on the sea and the crowds on the land. He who had constant communion with the Father even in the most crowded throng, was yet so much man that He yearned for silent prayer and lonely fellowship. He who was incapable of distraction went aside to pray.

47. **Even.** The Jews had two evenings, the early and the late : the first began at 3 P.M., our afternoon ; the second, at sundown. Both are mentioned by Matt. xiv. 15, 23. Here it is the late evening, extending from sundown onward.

**The ship (boat) was in the midst of the sea.** As the disciples rowed across the lake, they could see the slope on which the multitudes had been miraculously fed only an hour before, and the hill-top where the Master was at prayer, praying for them, they knew. Darkness came down on them rowing, and shut out first the place of fellowship, and then the place where Jesus was. And still the scene repeats itself in the Christian life. Spiritual darkness comes down upon us, and we cannot see either where we lately had fellowship with Him, or the hill-top of heaven where the risen Saviour is making intercession for us. When they had lost sight of the Master, then the wind came down on them, and they felt the need of His presence.

48. **Toiling.** The word *toiling* is translated *torment* in Matt. viii. 6, 29. The disciples had to make violent and distressing efforts, almost beyond their strength, to keep the boat with her head steady to the blast. "We may have Christ for us, and yet wind and tide against us ; but it is a comfort to Christ's disciples in a storm, that their Master is in the heavenly mount interceding for them."

**He saw them.** "How much more dost Thou now, O Saviour, from the heights of Thy glorious advancement, behold us, Thy wretched servants, tossed on the unquiet sea of this world, and beaten with the troublesome and threatening billows of affliction ! Thou foresawest their toil and danger

the wind was contrary unto them : and about the fourth watch of the night he cometh unto them, walking upon the sea, 49 and would have passed by them. But when they saw him walking upon the sea, they supposed it had been a spirit,<sup>1</sup> 50 and cried out : for they all saw him, and were troubled. And immediately he talked with them,<sup>2</sup> and saith unto them, Be of 51 good cheer : it is I ; be not afraid. And he went up unto

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<sup>1</sup> supposed it was an apparition

<sup>2</sup> But he straightway spake with them

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ere Thou dismissedst them and purposely didst send them away, that they might be tossed. Thou, that couldst prevent our sufferings by Thy power, wilt permit them in Thy wisdom, that Thou mayest glorify Thy mercy in our deliverance, and confirm our faith by the issue of our distresses" (Hall).

**Fourth watch.** "The proper Jewish reckoning recognized only three watches. . . . (1) *The first or beginning of the watches*, from sunset to 10 P.M. (Lam. ii. 19) ; (2) *the middle watch*, from 10 P.M. to 2 A.M. (Judg. vii. 19) ; (3) *the morning watch*, from 2 A.M. to sunrise (Ex. xiv. 24 ; 1 Sam. xi. 11). After the Roman supremacy the number was increased to four, sometimes called *first, second*, etc., as here ; sometimes by the terms *even*, closing at 9 P.M., *midnight* ; *cock-crowing*, at 3 A.M. ; *morning*, at 6 A.M." (Maclear).

**Cometh to them.** The Son of God came from the Father to save His people, and Jesus came down from the hill-top communion with God to help His disciples toiling on the sea. This coming down to His disciples on the sea was a picture of the incarnation and humiliation of the Saviour. He came from communion with the Father. He came to save His people in trouble, and He did so by coming among them and making their troubles His. The wind on the lake smote Him as it smote them ; the spindrift wet His face and drenched His garments as it did theirs.

49. **It had been a spirit, an apparition.** Their minds were full of the usual fisher or sailor superstitions, of storm spirits who raise and direct the blasts. The spirit of the glen who had sent the storm down suddenly on the lake, was coming to complete his work of wrath.

50. **Were troubled.** There was more dread than joy in the presence of the Saviour. They would not have been so much afraid had they been expecting Him, but the troubles of the night had made them forget His promise. Their terror is not, however, a thing altogether unknown in the deeper religious experience. For when trouble comes upon the pious Christian, what is felt most sorely is not the outward calamity which his neighbours see, but an inward wound which comes from the conviction that God has actually forsaken him and delivered him over to the assaults of an unknown hostile spirit-power armed against him. There is no lesson harder to understand than that troubles are not signs of the wrath of God. Had the disciples seen that it was Jesus who was coming to them through the storm, they would not have been troubled ; could we know that behind the storms of life there is the Saviour Himself near us, we should not have that vague yet bitter sense of the presence of a spirit of evil who is seeking to overwhelm us.

**It is I, be not afraid.** It was time for the Saviour to speak when the disciples were almost lost with fear. He was present before, but they did

them into the ship ; and the wind ceased : and they were sore  
 52 amazed in themselves beyond measure, and wondered. For  
 they considered not the *miracle* of the loaves : for their heart  
 was hardened.<sup>1</sup>

53 And when they had passed over, they came into the land  
 54 of Gennesaret, and drew to the shore.<sup>2</sup> And when they were  
 55 come out of the ship,<sup>3</sup> straightway they knew him, and ran

<sup>1</sup> were sore amazed in themselves ; for they understood not concerning the loaves, but their heart was hardened

<sup>2</sup> and moored to the shore

<sup>3</sup> boat

not know it, and were afraid. It is enough for us to be assured of the Saviour's presence. The voice was token enough to those who knew its tones. Matthew tells us that it not only revived them, but prompted the impetuous Peter to venture across the waters to go to Jesus (Matt. xiv. 28) ; for true faith does not rest content with great and good desires, or even with peaceful contentment, it longs to act for Jesus.

51. **The wind ceased.** It fell as if exhausted, for that is the meaning of the word, just when the Lord went into the boat (Matt. xiv. 32). He did not rebuke the wind and sea this time. He willed a calm, and it came. He made the storm a calm (Ps. cvii. 29).

52. **They considered not,** R. V. *understood not*. "They ought to have inferred from the bread to the sea. The more exercised faith is, the more it becomes accustomed to discern the marvellous works of God" (Bengel).

**Hardened.** The phrase implies sluggish intellect rather than callous feeling. The disciples were still unable to respond to the appeals of the Saviour working wonders of grace. They were able to worship Him when He came into the boat, and to say, *Of a truth, Thou art the Son of God* (Matt. xiv. 33) ; but they did not know what that meant : they were unable to take it all in and apply it to their everyday wants and experiences.

### 3. *In the land of Gennesaret*, vi. 53-56 : Matt. xiv. 34-36.

53. **Gennesaret.** A crescent-shaped plain on the north-west shore of the Sea of Tiberias, about two miles and a half in length and about one in breadth, watered by three streams.

Josephus tells us that its soil was so fruitful that all sorts of trees could grow, and were planted in it. Walnuts, which require cold air, flourish there in great abundance ; palms, which grow best in heat ; olives and figs, which prefer a temperate climate. "One may call this place the ambition of nature, where it constrains those plants which are naturally enemies to each other to agree together. It is a happy strife of the seasons, as if every one of them laid claim to this country." Modern travellers also speak of "its charming bays and its fertile soil, rich with the scourings of the basaltic hills." This was the portion of the western shore to which the disciples came after their night of storm. For their course, see Map, p. 72.

**Drew to the shore ;** lit. *moored the boat*.

54. **Straightway they knew him.** Mark gives a most vivid description of the stir of the neighbourhood and the eagerness of the people as soon as they recognized Jesus. The friends of sick people ran to the houses, and seizing the pallet beds, carried their invalids to the great Healer, following

through that whole region round about, and began to carry about in beds<sup>1</sup> those that were sick, where they heard he was. And whithersoever he entered, into villages, or cities, or country, they laid the sick in the streets,<sup>2</sup> and besought him that they might touch if it were but the border of his garment: and as many as touched him were made whole.

CHAP. VII. 1 Then came together unto him the Pharisees, and 2 certain of the scribes, which came from Jerusalem. And when they saw some of his disciples eat bread with defiled,<sup>3</sup> 3 that is to say, with unwashen, hands, they found fault. For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash *their* hands

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1 on their beds

2 in the market-places

3 common

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Him wherever He went, if He had gone before; laying the diseased people in such places of public resort as they thought it likely He would pass through.

55. **Beds.** Compare note on ii. 4.

56. **In the streets;** really in the *market-places*, which corresponded to our village greens, and sometimes inside the town or village, sometimes outside, were the places of common resort for the inhabitants.

**Border of his garment.** See note on Mark v. 27. The garment was the outer robe, the *tallith* worn over the tunic. At each corner was a tassel with a thread or ribbon of blue. They asked leave to touch *this*, because of the peculiar sanctity supposed to belong to it. They asked to do what the woman with the issue did.

## II.—SEVENTH SOJOURN IN CAPERNAUM.

*The traditions about eating, vii. 1-23: Matt. xv. 1-20.*

1. **From Jerusalem.** Our Lord was at Capernaum not long after His return to the western side, for He delivered there His sermon on *the bread of life* (John vi. 22-65). During the Passover the Jewish and the Galilean rabbis had held consultations at Jerusalem; the feast over, scribes from Jerusalem came down to Galilee to watch, and if possible entrap Christ. He held this discussion with them, which contrasts the true religion and the false, "the righteousness which is of the law, and the righteousness which is of God by faith" (Phil. iii. 9); and then took refuge in a second journey of flight.

2. **Unwashen hands.** The Jews had two kinds of washing: (1) for cleanliness sake; (2) to remove ceremonial impurity. Here the *unwashen* refers to the second use of the word, and means, therefore, not "dirty," but ceremonially unclean. The Jews, like all Oriental nations who eat with their fingers, wash their hands before eating; but, besides, there was a ceremonial washing which the Pharisees insisted on, no matter how clean the hands.

**They found fault.** The words plainly mean that this inquisitorial committee of Jerusalem and Galilean scribes waited till they had caught the disciples in some act of ceremonial uncleanness, such as eating with "common" hands, with hands unconsecrated by the prescribed ceremonial washing.

3. **Wash their hands oft.** The word translated *oft* means literally *with the fist* (R.V. margin), and has been felt a difficulty. Some hold that when the Jews washed their hands in ceremonial washing, the hand was clenched



4 oft,<sup>1</sup> eat not, holding the tradition of the elders. And *when they come* from the market, except they wash,<sup>2</sup> they eat not.

<sup>1</sup> diligently, *or* up to the elbow, *or* with the fist

<sup>2</sup> wash themselves

and so immersed (up to the elbows, some say); others hold that the word means diligently.

For a careful statement and criticism of the various explanations, compare Morison, *in loco*.

**Eat not.** Rabbi Akiba, it is said, when imprisoned and given only enough of water to preserve life, preferred to die of starvation rather than eat food without ceremonial washing.

**The tradition of the elders.** The *elders* were the leading Jewish teachers, who expounded the law and applied its precepts to actual life. The *traditions of the elders* was that complicated code of rules for action which these teachers had deduced from the Mosaic law. According to their views, the law of Moses was a system of precepts which surrounded the whole of man's life, and enveloped every part of human existence in its embrace. This comprehensiveness was due not to the general principles of conduct which were embodied in the law, but to the fact that in their belief the Lawgiver, as Josephus says, "had left *nothing* undetermined or in suspense . . . beginning immediately from the earliest infancy and the details of the domestic life of every one, he left *nothing*, even of the very smallest consequence, to the disposal and judgment of those for whom he gave laws. Accordingly, he made a fixed rule of life what sorts of food they should use," etc. Every action was thus looked on as legal or illegal, and only one course of conduct was permissible. But human life is infinitely complex, and this completeness of the Mosaic law was only obtained by the addition of a host of supplementary laws framed by well-known teachers; and as new courses of conduct were continually being evolved out of the workings of individual and social life, it was the business of the elders to arrange each separate occupation, new or old, under a category of forbidden or not forbidden. This, of course, gave rise to a casuistry which at times bordered on folly, and frequently gave decisions at variance with the spirit of the legislation they were meant to expound and enforce. Jesus on more than one occasion with some sarcasm points this out, as in this passage, or as when He refers to the much-argued question about what should be done with a sheep that had fallen into a water-tank on the Sabbath day; was it to be pulled out, or left in? Some distinguished authorities held that it should be left in, but that food should be given it; while others argued that it should be pulled out.

4. **Wash** here means take a bath, to *baptize*, to wash oneself. In the market-place, or place of public assembly, the Jew might chance to meet a heathen, and become unclean by contact; for the market-places or bazaars were crowded, and a large amount of personal contact was inevitable, while it was impossible to know what was the ceremonial condition of the persons touched. So, to avoid chance defilement, the Jew bathed himself when he got home. This bathing or baptizing was not immersion, for we do not hear of private baths even in wealthy houses; and immersion in a public bath, if there was such, would not have cleansed from, but might have been a new means of contracting, ceremonial uncleanness. It was sprinkling, the common mode of purification among the Jews, done usually by *hyssop*. Indeed, in the Sinaitic and in the Vatican MSS., the word is not baptize, but sprinkle.

And many other things there be, which they have received to hold, *as* the washing of cups, and pots, brassen vessels, and  
 5 of tables.<sup>1</sup> Then the Pharisees and scribes asked him, Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders,  
 6 but eat bread with unwashen<sup>2</sup> hands? He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied<sup>3</sup> of you hypocrites, as it is written,

This people honoureth me with *their* lips,  
 But their heart is far from me.

7 Howbeit, in vain do they worship me,  
 Teaching *for* doctrines the commandments of men.<sup>4</sup>

8 For, laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, *as* the washing of pots and cups: and many  
 9 other such like things ye do.<sup>5</sup> And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep  
 10 your own tradition. For Moses said, Honour thy father and

<sup>1</sup> couches<sup>2</sup> common<sup>3</sup> Well did Isaiah prophesy of you<sup>4</sup> But in vain do they worship me, teaching as their doctrines the precepts of men<sup>5</sup> Ye leave the commandment of God, and hold fast the tradition of men

**Cups and pots, brassen vessels, and of tables.** The cup is any drinking vessel. The word translated *pot* (*xestes*) is a contraction for the Latin word *saxtarius*, and its use is one of Mark's Latinisms; compare Introduction, p. 34. The brassen vessel might be translated *copper*; these coppers were the large cooking vessels still common in Syria. *Tables* ought to be *couches* or *beds*, and is a mistranslation; the best MSS., however, omit the word altogether.

5. **Then the Pharisees and scribes asked him.** *Then* ought to be *and*. Vers. 3-4 are a parenthesis, and this verse naturally carries on the description of the attempt of the Pharisees to bring Christ into conflict with the Mosaic law.

6. **Well hath Esaias.** Calvin remarks that Jesus does not mean that Isaiah was actually looking forward to the scribes of His time when He uttered the words quoted by our Lord, but that the prophet's phrases depict them to the life as if he had seen them. This is implied in the word *well*, or *to perfection, to the life*. The quotation is from Isa. xxix. 13, but does not exactly follow either the Septuagint or the Hebrew text.

**With the lips . . . with the heart.** The contrast is between a religion of external observances and of inward sentiment and motive.

7. **Teaching for doctrines;** rather, *teaching as their doctrines the commandments of men*. Their teachings, which they regarded as of such supreme importance, their *forbidden* and *unforbidden*, were nothing but the decisions of men, had no divine sanction, and therefore might be disregarded.

8. **As the washing of pots, etc.** These words are omitted in the best MS. authorities.

9. **Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep, etc.** Our Lord proceeds to give a notorious instance in which those traditions of the elders not merely are of simple human origin, but are of sinful human device; for it actually contradicts or furnishes worshippers with a means of evading one

- thy mother ; and, Whoso curseth<sup>1</sup> father or mother, let him  
 11 die the death : but ye say, If a man shall say to his father or  
 mother, *It is Corban*, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever  
 12 thou mightest be profited by me ; *he shall be free.*<sup>2</sup> And ye  
 suffer him no more<sup>3</sup> to do ought for his father or his mother ;  
 13 making the word of God of none effect through your tradition,  
 which ye have delivered : and many such like things do ye.  
 14 And when he had called all the people *unto him*, he said unto

<sup>1</sup> And he that speaketh evil of

<sup>2</sup> That wherewith thou mightest have been profited by me is Corban, that is to  
 say, Given to God

<sup>3</sup> we no longer suffer him

of the solemn ten words, the very core of Mosaic moral teaching. The casuistry of Jewish elders had made it possible that, by a dexterous use of the law of vows, a Jew might keep the law blameless, and yet allow his father or mother to starve. The fifth commandment says, "Honour thy father and thy mother ;" and other precepts forbid a son to speak evil of his parents on pain of death ; but a dexterous casuistry can evade all that by the use of the law of Corban.

11. *It is Corban ; R. V., If a man shall say to his father or his mother, That wherewith thou mightest have been profited by me is Corban, that is to say, Given to God ; ye no longer suffer him to do aught for his father or his mother.* Corban means an offering of any sort made to God, and its special meaning is an offering made in fulfilment of a vow. Vows, according to the Mosaic law, could be positive or negative, *i.e.* the worshipper might devote to God an animal or some portion of his property, or he might vow to refrain from using things in themselves lawful ; the Nazarite vowed not to use wine. Founding on this, the Rabbis taught that worshippers might interdict themselves from using a particular thing for a particular use by vowing it to God, and calling it *Corban*. A man might interdict himself from assisting his parents by calling the particular sum required to aid them *Corban*, and so making it unlawful to use it in that particular way. The words *he shall be free*, are not in the original either here or in the corresponding passage in Matthew. Our Lord seems to have stopped short, allowing the words to be filled up by the indignation of the hearers.

13. *Traditions of the elders* were that *unwritten law* which it was said God delivered orally to Moses, who in turn transmitted it orally to the elders. It was written down in the Talmud, or "doctrine," which consists of (1) the *Mishna*, or "repetition" of the law ; and (2) the *Gemara*, or "supplement" to it. See ver. 3.

**Making the word of God of none effect.** *Annulling* or *repealing* the word of God is the strict meaning of the verb used. The same word is found in Gal. iii. 17, and is there translated *disannul*.

**Many such like things.** For what Jesus had said about *Corban* was only an illustration of a whole method of false treatment of the law of God.

14. **And when he had called all the people unto him.** The interview with the scribes and Pharisees had probably been in the house ; they had been on the watch, and had surprised our Lord and His disciples at table eating. Jesus now breaks up the conference, and appeals, as usual, to the

them, Hearken unto me every one *of you*,<sup>1</sup> and understand :  
 15 there is nothing from without a man, that entering<sup>2</sup> into him  
 can defile him : but the things which come out of him, those  
 16 are they that<sup>3</sup> defile the man. If any man have ears to hear,  
 17 let him hear. And when he was entered into the house from  
 the people, his disciples asked him concerning the parable.  
 18 And he saith unto them, Are ye so without understanding  
 also? Do ye not perceive, that whatsoever thing from with-  
 19 out entereth into the man, *it* cannot defile him ; because it  
 entereth not into his heart, but into the belly, and goeth out  
 20 into the draught, purging all meats?<sup>4</sup> And he said, That

<sup>1</sup> And he called to him the multitude again, and said unto them, Hear me, all of you

<sup>2</sup> going

<sup>3</sup> are those that

<sup>4</sup> *This he said*, making all meats clean

people. They know about the question disputed, and Jesus proceeds to lay before them the general principle which should rule all such cases as that brought forward by the Pharisees.

15. **There is nothing from without a man.** The whole case discussed, with the general principle embodying it, is put in one short, pithy saying, fitted to stick in the memory. It is significant how our Lord turns from the scribes to the people, even when He is about to enunciate a great principle. His theology is not for the closet, but for the pulpit ; it is an appeal to the broad, popular sympathies rather than to hair-splitting intellects. The fundamental spring of all impurity is within, in self—that is the great moral truth to be laid hold on and kept.

16. **If any man have ears.** This verse has been deleted in the Revised Version, and the weight of evidence is greatly against it.

17. **His disciples asked.** Peter was the questioner (Matt. xv. 15).

**The parable**, in the sense of *short pithy saying*. Note on iv. 2.

18. **Without understanding.** The disciples, notwithstanding their daily intercourse with Jesus, made slow advance in knowledge. The pharisaical idea that religion was a matter of observing certain rules of external conduct, and the performance of certain acts such as “washing,” etc., was so engrained in them that they could not easily understand what was meant by heart-religion. Christ’s simple statements, commonplaces in New Testament religion, were “dark sayings,” or parables, to them.

19. **Purging all meats.** A difficult phrase, only found in Mark. Perhaps the best explanation is to make the word *purging* agree with *He saith* (18) : “He saith this . . . and in so saying, cleanseth all meats.” This has been adopted by the Revisers, and is defended by Farrar (*Expositor*, 1876), Scrivener, Ellicott, and Plumptre. It is the explanation which was first suggested by Chrysostom. Alford, Meyer, and Morison connect it with the draught, and make it refer to the purification which comes from the removal of the useless portion of food from the body. The former seems to be the better explanation, but the construction is very obscure. If we take Chrysostom’s suggestion, then the Evangelist means to say that Jesus, both by the general principle He enunciated of the contrast between external, artificial purity, and the purity of conscience and will, and by the special

- 21 which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man. For  
 22 from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts,  
 23 adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wicked-  
 ness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy,<sup>1</sup> pride,  
 24 foolishness: all these evil things come<sup>2</sup> from within, and  
 defile the man.
- 24 And from thence he arose, and went<sup>3</sup> into the borders of

<sup>1</sup> railing<sup>2</sup> proceed<sup>3</sup> went away

illustration He used, actually ended the old ceremonial distinction between meats clean and unclean. The phrase is only found in Mark's Gospel, and, it may be, was suggested by Peter. If so, does it not recall Peter's dream at Joppa, and the voice, "What God hath cleansed make not thou common" (Acts x. 15)? Our Lord by this general principle of the thorough distinction between ceremonial and heart-religion had made clean all meats, even those forbidden by the Mosaic law, and had justified the command given to Peter in the dream, "Kill and eat," even animals classed as ceremonially unclean.

21. **Heart.** Every man has within him the root of every sin. "Our care must be to wash our hearts from wickedness" (Matt. Henry). God desires inward purity, and the heart is the source whence all inward purity or impurity flows.

**Evil thoughts.** "Thirteen forms of evil are here noticed as proceeding from the heart. The first seven, in the plural number, are *predominant actions*; the latter six, in the singular, *dispositions* (Gal. v. 19-21)."—Maclear.

22. **Covetousness** is not merely the love of money, but that vice which, a mean between theft and rapine, aims to induce your neighbour by various artifices to give you something you ought not to take from him.

**Wickedness** (*πονηρία*, from *πόνος*, *hard labour*), *wickednesses* (R. V.), Matt. xxii. 18; Luke xi. 39; Rom. i. 29; 1 Cor. v. 8; Eph. vi. 12. The word means properly *knaveries*, *rascalities*, *villanies*. It has the same root and meaning as those equivalent words,—actions to be looked for from slaves.

**Deceit** means here any contrivance to get an advantage over one's neighbour.

**Lasciviousness**, translated *wantonness* in Rom. xiii. 13; 2 Pet. ii. 18.

**An evil eye.** The most malignant kind of envy (Matt. xx. 15).

**Pride**, *ὑπερφανία* (Rom. i. 30; 2 Tim. iii. 2).

**Foolishness** (Eph. v. 17; 1 Pet. ii. 15). That folly which consists in absence of the fear of God. "Foolishness is placed last of all, inasmuch as it is that which renders all the rest incurable" (Bengel).

23. **All these evil things come from within.** The list of evil things, says Matthew Henry, begins with *ill-thinking*, which is the spring of all our commissions, and ends with *unthinking*, which is the spring of all our omissions. The lesson repeated again is, that the heart is the chief source of impurity, and that what God requires is inward purity or a cleansing of the heart.

### III.—SECOND JOURNEY OF FLIGHT.

1. *Retirement to coasts of Tyre and Sidon*, vii. 24: Matt. xv. 21.

24. **From thence he arose.** The "Galilean ministry," properly so called, ended (vi. 30) with the return of the apostles from their preaching

Tyre and Sidon, and entered into an house, and would have  
 25 no man know *it*: but he could not be hid. For a *certain*  
 woman, whose young daughter had an unclean spirit,<sup>1</sup> heard of  
 26 him, and came and fell at his feet: the woman was a Greek,  
 a Syrophenician by nation; and she besought him that he  
 27 would cast forth the devil out of her daughter. But Jesus  
 said unto her, Let the children first be filled: for it is not

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<sup>1</sup> But straightway a woman, whose little daughter had an unclean spirit

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mission. The crowds following Him to the coasts of Bethsaida Julius in Passover time prolonged it somewhat; but what followed seems to have finally determined our Lord to retire until His time was fulfilled. The Pharisees of Western Galilee had long been offended; their opposition was now strengthened by alliance with the Pharisees of Jerusalem. Herod's suspicions were aroused, and the people, angry at some of His sermons, were full of doubts. Our Lord saw in all these things signs of the end, and His disciples had to be prepared for it in retirement. He spent most of His time with them on the borders of Phœnicia, in the half-heathen Decapolis, or on the slopes of Lebanon, for the most part either keeping out of the tetrarchy of Herod Antipas or residing where He could easily cross the frontier. When He did pass through Galilee, His movements were carefully concealed (viii. 26, ix. 30).

**Tyre and Sidon.** Two Phœnician cities which had been famous for centuries as centres of trade and of wealth. Phœnicia was a long, narrow strip of plain between the mountains and the sea. It is probable that our Lord went into the Phœnician land, for, according to R. V. (31), He went through Sidon after leaving the borders of Tyre.

2. *Healing the Syrophenician woman's daughter*, 25-30: Matt. xv. 22-28.

25. **Heard of him.** Jesus had not been there before, but people of the region had been in Galilee and seen Him (Mark iii. 8), and had carried back the news.

26. **Greek** by education, *Phœnician* born, *Syrian* by political division. The Syrophenicians were the Phœnicians living in Syria; they called themselves Canaanites (Matt. xv. 22). Other Phœnicians, the Carthaginians, living in Africa, were called Liby-Phœnicians, from Libya, the name for North Africa.

27. **Jesus said.** When Matthew and Mark are combined, the scene was—(1) As Jesus and His disciples were walking she accosted Him, crying out, "Have mercy upon me, O Lord, Thou Son of David: my daughter is vexed with a devil," and was answered by *silence*; (2) the disciples suggest that Jesus should cure her daughter, and they are answered by *refusal*: I am not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel; (3) she follows to the house; Jesus again refuses to cure a Canaanite, and this time with an implied *reproach*: "Let the children first be filled; for it is not meet to take the children's loaf and to cast it unto the dogs;" (4) she persists, and gets the blessing.

Let the children first be filled. This sentence is omitted in Matthew, and Mark in preserving it shows us the gleam of hope given by Jesus,

meet to take the children's bread,<sup>1</sup> and to cast *it* unto the  
 28 dogs. And she answered and said unto him, Yes, Lord : yet<sup>2</sup>  
 29 the dogs under the table eat of the children's crumbs. And  
 he said unto her, For this saying go thy way ; the devil is  
 30 gone out of thy daughter. And when she was come to her

<sup>1</sup> loaf<sup>2</sup> even

which encouraged the woman to persist. This is one of the numerous passages where Mark's narrative seems to be the description of an eye-witness. Peter heard the words, and saw the effect on the woman. The term "dogs" was commonly used by the Jews to denote all Gentiles who lived outside the institutions of the ceremonial law, for the dog all over the East is regarded as the symbol of impurity. When Paul (Phil. iii. 2) calls his opponents, the judaizing teachers, "dogs," he uses the usual epithet of his nation to denote those who are outside the true Israel, which in his view was the Christian Church. For Scripture use of the word "dog" as a term of reproach, compare 1 Sam. xvii. 43, xxiv. 14 ; 2 Sam. xvi. 9 ; 2 Kings viii. 13 ; Matt. vii. 6 ; Rev. xxii. 15. It has been noted by several commentators that Jesus softens the term of reproach by using the diminutive "little dogs," "whelps."

28. **Yes, Lord.** Notice how the woman varies her address. She first calls on Christ, as Matthew tells us, by the name of the Messiah of Israel, and then she beseeches Him as the sovereign Lord of all, whether Jew or Gentile. "Child of a doomed, rejected race, well mightest thou have taken the Saviour's words as a final sentence cutting off all hope, sending thee back without relief to thy miserable home to nurse thy frenzied child in the arms of dull despair. But there was in thee a depth of affection for that poor child of thine, and a tenacity of purpose that will not let thee give up the case till effort after effort be made" (Hanna). "Yes, Lord. Was not that a master-stroke ? She snares Christ in His own words" (Luther).

29. **For this saying.** Matthew tells us that Jesus added, *O woman, great is thy faith.* For that faith, expressed in that saying, she got her answer in the cure of her daughter. This miracle must be taken along with that wrought on the Roman centurion's servant. In both cases, in this one in particular, Jesus went beyond the commonwealth of Israel in His work of founding the new kingdom. In both cases, there was a wonderful manifestation of faith given by those at whose request the cure was wrought. Here we find an explanation of Jesus' harshness. He was about to disclose the mystery hid for ages, that the Gentiles were to be fellow-heirs of the promises which had come to them through Abraham's faith, and He made clear the ground of this partaking in the heritage. The new children of the promise had that same faith by which Abraham won for his children by descent the Messianic hope, and won their share in the same way as did the father of the faithful. Hence Jesus gave repulse after repulse, that He might show in the end how strong that faith was which triumphed over every difficulty. Abrahamic faith obtained Abraham's blessing.

30. **The devil gone out.** The girl, like the centurion's servant (Luke vii. 6) and the nobleman's son (John iv. 46-53), was cured at a distance. "The paralytic broke through outward hindrances (ii. 4), blind Bartimæus through the hindrances opposed by his fellow-men ; but this woman, more heroically

house, she found the devil gone out, and her daughter laid upon the bed.<sup>1</sup>

- 31 And again, departing from the coasts of Tyre and Sidon,  
 he came unto<sup>2</sup> the sea of Galilee, through the midst of the  
 32 coasts of Decapolis. And they bring unto him one that was  
 deaf, and had an impediment in his speech, and they beseech  
 33 him to put his hand upon him. And he took him aside from  
 the multitude,<sup>3</sup> and put his fingers into his ears, and he spit,  
 34 and touched his tongue; and looking up to heaven, he

<sup>1</sup> And she went away unto her house, and found the child laid upon the bed, and the demon gone out.

<sup>2</sup> And again he went out from the borders of Tyre, and went through Sidon unto

<sup>3</sup> And he took him aside from the multitude privately

than all, through apparent hindrances even from Christ Himself" (Trench). The first act of salvation in the Gentile world was an answer to persistent prayer.

There are other lessons also in this miracle, especially for those who, like this Gentile woman, are striving for others' good. Her faith was not only rightly directed, but persevering, and that persevering faith came out in patient exertion. We are too apt to think that outcasts can be brought to Christ by making them go through a syllogism; there must be prolonged patient work for them if we are to get them to and keep them near the Saviour.

### 3. *Miracles in the Decapolis*, vii. 31-viii. 9.

#### (1) *Healing the deaf and dumb man*, 31-37. (*Only found in Mark.*)

31. **Coasts of Tyre and Sidon**; R. V., *And again He went out from the borders of Tyre and came through Sidon unto the Sea of Galilee, through the midst of the borders of Decapolis*. Our Lord went northward to Sidon, then eastward from Phœnicia, skirting the borders of Northern Galilee, from the foot of Lebanon through the gorge of the Leontes to the sources of the Jordan; thence southward on the eastern side through Gaulonitis to the mountains east of the lake, always keeping out of the dominions of Herod. Map, p. 45.

**Decapolis**; note on v. 20; a region full of foreigners who were heathen.

32. **Had an impediment**. The Greek word means that he could hardly articulate.

33. **And he took him**. This cure is effected by a succession of acts all suited to stir up a lively expectation of a blessing. The man was deaf and could not be spoken to. Jesus speaks in signs—(1) takes him aside from the multitude—*alone with Jesus*; (2) put His fingers into his ears—*these are to be opened*; (3) touched his tongue with His saliva—*Christ's tongue is to heal his*; (4) looked up to heaven and sighed—*God's help in man's sorrow*; (5) spake the word *Ephphatha*—and the man spake plain (Isa. xxxv. 5, 6).

34. **Looking up to heaven** "occurs also (1) in the blessing of the five loaves and two fishes (Matt. xiv. 19; Mark vi. 41); (2) at the raising of Lazarus (John xi. 41); and (3) before the high-priestly prayer for the apostles (John xvii. 1)" (Maclear).



sighed, and saith unto him, Ephphatha, that is, Be opened.  
 35 And straightway his ears were opened, and the string of his  
 36 tongue was loosed,<sup>1</sup> and he spake plain. And he charged  
 them that they should tell no man: but the more he charged  
 37 them, so much the more a great deal they published *it*; and  
 were beyond measure astonished, saying, He hath done all  
 things well: he maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb  
 to speak.

CHAP. VIII. 1 In those days, the multitude being very great, and  
 having nothing to eat,<sup>2</sup> Jesus called his disciples *unto him*,  
 2 and saith unto them, I have compassion on the multitude,  
 because they have now been with me three days, and have  
 3 nothing to eat: and if I send them away fasting to their own  
 houses, they will faint by the way: for divers of them came<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> And his ears were opened, and the bond of his tongue was loosed

<sup>2</sup> In those days when there was again a great multitude, and they had nothing  
 to eat

<sup>3</sup> some of them came

**Sighed.** "This sigh was not drawn from Christ on account of the single tongue and ear of this poor man; but it is a common sigh over all tongues and ears. The greatest mischief which has been inflicted on Christianity has not risen from tyrants, but from that little bit of flesh which abides within the jaws" (Luther).

**Ephphatha.** Mark gives us the very word that Jesus used—the Aramaic language of the people.

36. **He charged them that they should tell no man.** The miracle could not be concealed from the crowd who had surrounded Jesus; but He asked them not to blazon the matter abroad; He needed retirement; He wished to avoid popular insurrection, which had nearly taken place after the feeding of the 5000; He had perpetually to remind His followers that His kingdom was not of this world.

37. **Beyond measure astonished.** An unusual phrase, found nowhere else in the New Testament, coined to express the boundlessness of the astonishment of the multitudes of the Decapolis at the miracle done by Jesus.

(2) *The feeding of four thousand*, viii. 1-9: Matt. xv. 32-38.

1. **The multitude.** When Jesus went first to the eastern shore, the people prayed Him to depart; but He had left the demoniac of Gadara to be a preacher to the Decapolis, and now, when He passes through the country, great multitudes collect, bring their sick folk (Matt. xv. 30, 31), and, with women and children in their company (Matt. xv. 38), follow Christ for three days (Matt. xv. 32). "They that have a full feast for their souls may be content with slender provision for their bodies" (Matt. Henry).

2. **I have compassion.** The word denotes such feelings of natural compassionateness as parents have towards their children.

3. **Divers of them came.** As these words stand in the Authorized Version, they appear to be a statement made by the Evangelist, and not part

4 from far. And his disciples answered him, From whence can a man satisfy these *men* with bread here in the wilderness?  
 5 And he asked them, How many loaves have ye? And they  
 6 said, Seven. And he commanded the people to sit down on the ground: and he took the seven loaves, and gave thanks, and brake, and gave to his disciples to set before *them*; and  
 7 they did set *them* before the people. And they had a few small fishes: and he blessed, and commanded to set them  
 8 also before *them*. So they did eat, and were filled: and they  
 9 took up of the broken *meat* that was left seven baskets. And they that had eaten were about four thousand: and he sent  
 10 them away. And straightway he entered into a ship<sup>1</sup> with his disciples, and came into the parts of Dalmanutha.  
 11 And the Pharisees came forth, and began to question with

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<sup>1</sup> the boat

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of what Jesus said, as they actually are: the clause should read, "*And some of them have come from far.*"

4. His disciples answered. The old answer (vi. 37). "The mighty interpositions of God's hand in former passages of men's lives fall out of their memories. Each new difficulty appears insurmountable, as one from which there is no extraction; at each recurring necessity it seems as though the wonders of God's grace are exhausted, and had come to an end" (Trench).

8. Seven baskets. The *baskets* here are not the same kind as in the former miracle. The baskets of the "five thousand" are *kophinoi*, or small wicker-baskets, which the Jews had to carry their provisions; those of the "four thousand" are *spurides*, large hand-baskets like the one in which Paul was let down over the wall of Damascus (Acts ix. 25). All the four Evangelists use the first word in their accounts of the first miracle; and Jesus, when He recalls the miracles, uses the two different words (Mark viii. 19, 20). Both miracles of feeding were done when our Lord was a refugee; even then He forgot His own sorrows, and took upon Him the needs of all people.

4. *Across the sea to Dalmanutha*, viii. 10: Matt. xv. 39.

10. Dalmanutha. This place is nowhere else mentioned either in Scripture or out of it, and must have been an obscure village or district near the equally obscure Magadan (Matt. xv. 39, R. V.). Dr. Tristram, who makes Magadan Magdala, as in the A. V., identifies a small open valley a little south of *Mejdel* (Magdala) with Dalmanutha.

#### IV.—EIGHTH STAY AT CAPERNAUM (?).

*The Pharisees ask a sign*, viii. 11, 12: Matt. xvi. 1-4.

11. Came forth. Our Lord had returned to the western shore of the lake, to the scenes of His ministry. It is important to observe that this short return to Capernaum or its neighbourhood is the starting-point for another journey of flight.

- 12 him, seeking of him a sign from heaven, tempting him. And he sighed deeply in his spirit, and saith, Why doth this generation seek after a sign?<sup>1</sup> Verily I say unto you, There shall no sign be given unto this generation. And he left them, and entering into the ship<sup>2</sup> again, departed to the other side.
- 14 Now *the disciples* had forgotten to take bread, neither had they in the ship<sup>3</sup> with them more than one loaf. And he charged them, saying, Take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and of the leaven of Herod. And they reasoned among themselves, saying, *It is* because we have no bread.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> seek a sign<sup>2</sup> the boat<sup>3</sup> And they forgot to take bread, and they had not in the ship<sup>4</sup> And they reasoned one with another, saying, We have no bread.

**Seeking of him a sign.** This was the fourth time Jesus had been asked for a sign, *i.e.* that He should do a miracle on demand (John ii. 18, vi. 30; Matt. xii. 38); but now that the opposition to our Lord had become strong, the Pharisees were able to make His refusal lessen the already lessened confidence of the people in His power.

**12. Sighed deeply.** "For the demand for a sign from heaven was a demand that He should, as the Messiah of their expectation, accredit Himself by a great overmastering miracle; it was therefore fundamentally similar to the temptation in the wilderness which He had repelled" (Lange). And if He refused, He saw that He was to be finally rejected by the leaders of the people (Matt. xvi. 4).

#### V.—THIRD JOURNEY OF FLIGHT, viii. 13—ix. 32.

##### 1. *Across the sea to Bethsaida Julias*, viii. 13.

**13. He left them.** Left the place where He had laboured most to return for passing visits, but never again to teach or work miracles.

##### 2. *The leaven of the Pharisees*, viii. 14–21: Matt. xvi. 6–12.

**14. More than one loaf.** This fact is recorded by Mark alone. Peter must have remembered the one little cake of barley-meal, the only provisions with them.

**15. The leaven of the Pharisees, etc.** Our Lord, thinking over His rejection by the people, and the policy which had for the moment united Pharisees and Herodians, told His disciples to beware of that insidious spreading evil of hypocrisy, unbelief, and worldliness, which characterized the three parties in Palestine.

**16. It is because we have no bread.** They thought that our Lord spoke of real leaven (Matt. xvi. 12), and, angry at the Pharisees, had ordered the disciples to have no dealings with them, not to buy their leaven—in short, to treat them as the Pharisees would have treated Gentiles.

The text adopted by the Revised Version: *And they reasoned one with another, saying, We have no bread*, brings out more clearly the disjointed whispers of the disciples.

- 17 And when Jesus knew *it*, he saith unto them,<sup>1</sup> Why reason ye, because ye have no bread? perceive ye not yet, neither  
 18 understand? have ye your heart yet hardened? Having eyes, see ye not? and having ears, hear ye not? and do ye  
 19 not remember? When I brake the five loaves among five thousand, how many baskets full of fragments took ye up?  
 20 They say unto him, Twelve. And when the seven among four thousand, how many baskets full of fragments took ye  
 21 up? And they said, Seven. And he said unto them, How is it that ye do not understand?  
 22 And he cometh to Bethsaida; and they bring a blind

<sup>1</sup> And Jesus perceiving it, saith

17. And when Jesus knew *it*; lit., *And Jesus perceiving it*. He did not need to wait to be informed of how the disciples were misunderstanding Him.

**Have ye your heart yet hardened?** Compare vi. 52. The hardness is not callousness, but dulness, want of understanding.

18. **Having eyes, see ye not?** Jesus asks if they cannot understand Him yet. They had misunderstood His sayings in two ways; they took leaven in the most literal sense, and they thought that He was rebuking their forgetfulness. Could they not see, He asks them, that He knew well the worries of the day, and had no thought of blaming them for forgetting to bring food? Could they not trust Him enough to know that? Could they not see that He was speaking of spiritual things? had they not spiritual insight? They had been with Him long, they were clinging to Him when crowds were forsaking Him; had they not yet the spiritual insight and trust which such companionship should have produced? The disciples had spiritual powers conferred on them by the gift of God, and they neglected to use them. They had had privileges, but did not improve them. That was the fault for which Jesus blames them.

19. **How many baskets.** The word *basket* in verses 19 and 20 represents two different words. The basket of verse 19 is the small food hand-basket which was actually used in the miracle of feeding the 5000; the basket of verse 20 is the large basket which was used in the miracle of feeding the 4000. Compare vi. 43 and viii. 8.

21. **How is it that ye do not understand?** It is so difficult to know that religion does not consist in outward separations, but in heart-clinging to Christ. They imagined that Jesus was angry with them because they had brought no bread at a time when they could not easily get more, for from henceforth no leaven was to be used by His disciples that had come from house of Pharisee or Herodian. That seemed to have been their view even then of what the new kingdom was to be—rules for eating and drinking, and so on; only different rules from the old ones, and excluding different classes of people.

3. *The blind man of Bethsaida Julias*, viii. 22-26. (Found in Mark only.)

22. **Bethsaida** was evidently on the farther side of the sea from Capernaum and Magdala, and on the way towards Cæsarea Philippi. This corresponds with the situation of Bethsaida Julias. It was in the tetrarchy of Philip, and

23 man unto him, and besought him to touch him. And he took the blind man by the hand, and led him out of the town;<sup>1</sup> and when he had spit on his eyes, and put his hands upon him, he asked him if he saw ought. And he looked up, 24 and said, I see men as trees, walking. After that he put *his* hands again upon his eyes, and made him look up: and he 25 was restored, and saw every man clearly.<sup>2</sup> And he sent him away to his house, saying, Neither go into the town, nor tell *it* to any in the town.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> village

<sup>2</sup> After that he put his hands again upon his eyes, and he looked up stedfastly, and was restored, and saw all things clearly.

<sup>3</sup> Do not even enter into the village.

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while there Jesus was beyond the reach of those who hoped to lay hold on Him by means of Herod Antipas.

**To touch him.** This miracle is one of the few where there was a *gradual* recovery, and where our Lord wrought by external signs. It was done, as was the miracle on the deaf and dumb, in a half pagan country, and in both cases Christ was asked to *touch* and heal. If the people thought that Christ did miracles by magic, His deeds dispelled the imagination.

**23. Led him out of the town.** The Greek word commonly means *village*, although it is sometimes applied to towns. Josephus tells us that Philip raised Bethsaida from the rank of a village to that of a city. The man was led out of the town for the sake of privacy. He does not seem to have belonged to Bethsaida, for Jesus told him after the cure not even to go into the town.

**If he saw ought.** *Ought* means *anything*. Christ first anointed his eyes with saliva, then touched him, and then put this question. It was evidently meant to draw attention to the gradual character of the cure, and to convince the man that no magical work was being performed.

**24. I see men as trees, walking.** The Revised Version is much better, and brings out Mark's graphicness, which is entirely obscured in the text. I see men; for I behold them as trees walking. The sudden joyous exclamation, "I see men;" then he finds that sight is still imperfect, and qualifies his statement.

**25. Made him look up.** The verse ought to read, Then again *He laid His hands upon his eyes, and he looked stedfastly and was restored*. Jesus did not need to bid the man look or look up again. At the second touch he looked stedfastly, took a long, steady stare, and found that he was perfectly restored.

**26. To his home,** which therefore was not in Bethsaida.

Schleiermacher finds the miracle to be a sort of parable also, foreshadowing the next scene in our Lord's history—(1) withdrawal of Jesus from the scenes of His ministry; He brought the man out of the village. (2) The miracle was done gradually; so His disciples had obscure views of Jesus. (3) The command not to tell any one; the care the Redeemer manifested about what men thought of Him. (4) The sight restored; the confession of Peter. Such interpretations are very fanciful, and therefore tend to weaken our hold on an historical Christ.

27 And Jesus went out, and his disciples, into the towns of  
 Cæsarea Philippi: and by the way he asked his disciples,  
 28 saying unto them, Whom do men say that I am? And they  
 answered, John the Baptist: but some say, Elias; and others,  
 29 One of the prophets. And he saith unto them, But whom  
 say ye that I am? And Peter answereth and saith unto him,

4. *At Cæsarea Philippi*, viii. 27: Matt. xvi. 13.

27. *Cæsarea Philippi*. Our Lord went north from Bethsaida some twenty-five or thirty miles along the eastern side of the Jordan to its "upper source" near the town. This town is to be distinguished from the important Cæsarea on the coast, Cæsarea Stratonis, the seat of the Roman government, and the city where Paul was imprisoned. It was situated at the most eastern and chief of the two recognized sources of the Jordan, on a rocky terrace under Mount Hermon, a few miles east of Dan, the old frontier city of Israel. It is the Panium or Paneas of Josephus—a name which still survives in the modern name Panea. It had been rebuilt by Philip the Tetrarch, within whose territories it was situated, and who gave it his own name and that of the emperor. Modern travellers say that the cliffs under which the first confession of the Messiahship was given, bear traces of the worship of Baal and of Pan.

5. *Peter's confession*, viii. 27–30: Matt. xvi. 13–20; Luke ix. 18–21.

27. *Asked his disciples*. Jesus had been finally rejected by the Pharisees and by the Galileans. The people *had* fancied He was the Messiah, but they did so no longer. Those who yet revered Him spoke of Him as (1) *John the Baptist* risen from the dead, bringing supernatural powers with him from the unseen world; (2) as *Elias* or *Elijah*, the great ideal of a spiritual reformer, whose return to earth as the forerunner was expected (Mal. iv. 5); or (3) as a prophet. Nobody spoke of Him as the Messiah. "As Satan could not rob the Jews of the conviction that Christ would come, he changed Him into various shapes, and, as it were, cut Him in pieces. His next scheme was to bring forward many pretended Christs. By similar contrivances he continued ever afterwards either to tear Christ in pieces or to exhibit Him under a false character" (Calvin). Matthew tells us that Christ's question was, "Whom do men say that I, *the Son of man*, am?" He was acknowledged to be the Son of man, but in what sense did they acknowledge His right to this title? Did they give it the meaning that Daniel did when he prophesied, "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought Him near before Him"? (Dan. vii. 13). Did they mean by the phrase that He was the Messiah, the King who was to have an *everlasting dominion* (Dan. vii. 14), or did they use it in any lower sense?

29. *But whom say ye that I am?* The question was put in circumstances to try their faith. Jesus had been rejected of the rulers and scribes, a combination of Pharisees and Herodians had been formed against Him, He had been forced to flee a third time from the scenes of His Galilean ministry, and was now wandering in the most distant part of Palestine a fugitive. He was in a half heathen land; the rocks that overhung the highway were marked here and there with the emblems of a gross degrading paganism. He felt that the time and place were tests of faith. Were these disciples also to go away?

30 Thou art the Christ. And he charged them that they should  
 31 tell no man of him. And he began to teach them, that the  
 and if they would confess Him, how were they to bear the news of yet further  
 steps in the humiliation? Jesus prepared Himself for the question, and for  
 what was to follow it, by silent prayer; and then, after the strength which  
 came to Him while "He was alone praying" (Luke ix. 18), He put the  
 momentous question to the disciples.

**Thou art the Christ.** What of the disciples; will they too hesitate?  
 Peter answers promptly, "*Thou art the Christ.*" Matthew says that Peter's  
 answer was, "*Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God*" (Matt. xvi. 16),  
 an exact antithesis to Jesus' question. Luke's version is "*the Christ of God*"  
 (Luke ix. 20); cf. the revelation to Simeon (Luke ii. 26), *the Lord's Christ*.  
 Similar testimonies had been given earlier in the ministry of our Lord.  
 Nathanael had confessed that the Jesus who had called him was *the Son of*  
*God, the King of Israel*. Peter after the rejection at Capernaum had confessed  
 Him to be the *Holy One of God* (John vi. 69, R. V.). These confessions were  
 all different from this one, however, given in answer to a solemn question put  
 after solemn prayer, in circumstances like those in which the little company  
 were then. This was the central point in Jesus' training of the Twelve; He  
 had now won the deliberate trust and conviction of those whom He had  
 chosen to live in close fellowship with Himself through His ministry, who  
 were to be witnesses for Him after His departure, and who, continuing His  
 ministry, were to lay the foundations of the Church that was to preach the  
 Gospel to every creature. This utterance of Peter may therefore be regarded  
 as the first adoring confession of the New Testament Church; the Church, in  
 the germ, as it were, in Peter, for the first time bears worshipping witness to  
 her Lord. The question which Jesus put by the wayside near Cæsarea  
 Philippi to the Twelve, He has continued to put all down the stream of time  
 to every individual soul to whom He reveals Himself,—*Whom say ye that I*  
*the Son of man am?*—and the stream of adoring confession in answer has been  
 the spring of the life of His Church, and will be to the end of time.

30. And he charged them. Mark and Luke omit the blessing of Peter  
 (Matt. xvi. 16-18), which, however it may be interpreted, confers no primacy  
 on the ardent apostle; for all that was said to Peter was said twice afterwards  
 by Jesus to all the Twelve and to all the Church. Both Evangelists with  
 Matthew record our Lord's charge to keep the revelation contained in the  
 confession secret. Why? Lest Galilean enthusiasm would make Him king?  
 The time was past for that. Rather because His work had yet to be  
 finished, there was a cross to suffer before the crown could be worn; because  
 the disciples' faith was weak, and their knowledge small; because the Holy  
 Ghost had first to come to teach them the whole truth about Jesus ere they  
 could rightly proclaim the Messiah.

6. *First clear prediction of the Passion*, viii. 31-ix. 1: Matt. xvi. 21-28;  
 Luke ix. 22-27.

31. **Began to teach.** They had confessed Him the Messiah. Did they  
 know the Messiah's work?—suffering, rejection, death, and rising again?  
 Could they His apostles still believe when they knew all, when their crude  
 Messianic conceptions of earthly splendour and temporal rule were shattered,  
 and they began to see that they were followers of a suffering Saviour? It  
 was just before and during the night of the Captivity that the old prophets

Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and  
 32 after three days rise again. And he spake that saying openly.  
 33 And Peter took him, and began to rebuke him. But when he had turned about and looked on his disciples, he rebuked Peter, saying, Get thee behind me, Satan : for thou savourest

began to teach Israel the mystery of suffering in their revelation of a suffering, sorrowing Redeemer ; it was during a journey of flight, far away from familiar Galilee, surrounded by a half heathen people, that our Lord gave the first clear intimation that He was to suffer many things, and be slain.

**The elders, the chief priests, and the scribes.** Jesus was to be rejected by each of the three great sections which made up the Jewish Sanhedrin, *i.e.* by all those who were the religious guides and authorities in the land (Mark ix. 27).

**And be killed.** The precise mode of death was not told all at once, but was introduced by obscure intimations, as in ver. 34, until in the last journey to Jerusalem Jesus plainly said that He was to be crucified (Matt. xx. 19).

**32. Openly, i.e. plainly,** for there had been many an obscure intimation before this :—

(1) In John the Baptist's exclamation, *The Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world* (John i. 29).

(2) In our Lord's statement to the Jews at His first Passover, *Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up* (John ii. 19), when He spake of the temple of His body.

(3) In His talk with Nicodemus, *As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of man be lifted up* (John iii. 14).

(4) In His talk with the disciples of John at the table of Matthew the publican, *But the days will come when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them* (Mark ii. 20, and Matt. ix. 15).

(5) In His charge to the disciples, *He that taketh not his cross and followeth after me, is not worthy of me* (Matt. x. 38).

(6) In His sermon on the Bread of Life at Capernaum, *The bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world* (John vi. 51).

**Peter took him.** The idea of a suffering Saviour was revolting to the disciples ; and Peter, as impetuously wrong as he had before been impetuously right, spoke for the Twelve.

**33. Get thee behind me, Satan.** Jesus uses to Peter the very words He spoke to Satan in the wilderness of the Temptation, for the apostle was tempting his Master with the same temptation. The great enemy took our Lord up to an exceeding high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them, and promised Him lordship over these if He forsook His vocation. The Pharisees more than once offered to set Christ at the head of the patriotic party in Palestine if He showed them a sign—manna from the sky, etc. Peter proposes Messiahship without suffering and death. In Gethsemane the temptation came too. Messiahship without drinking the cup of agony. All through our Lord's human life this temptation was present to Him. Cannot the Messiah's work be done without the cross? May not salvation be won for His people without the atoning death? The same thought is the chief intellectual temptation confronting believers now. Is not salvation without the atonement a possible thing?



not<sup>1</sup> the things that be of God, but the things that be of  
 34 men. And when he had called the people *unto him*, with his  
 disciples also,<sup>2</sup> he said unto them, Whosoever will come after  
 me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow  
 35 me. For whosoever will save<sup>3</sup> his life shall lose it; but  
 whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the  
 36 same shall save it. For what shall it profit a man, if he shall  
 37 gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?<sup>4</sup> Or what shall  
 38 a man give in exchange for his soul?<sup>5</sup> Whosoever therefore<sup>6</sup>  
 shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous

<sup>1</sup> mindest not

<sup>2</sup> And he called unto him the multitude, with his disciples, and said

<sup>3</sup> would save      <sup>4</sup> and forfeit his life      <sup>5</sup> his life      <sup>6</sup> For whosoever

**Savourest**; in the R. V., *mindest*. The Greek word, which means to *think*, is commonly used to denote taking a side in political strife. *For thou sidest with*. Matthew adds, *Thou art an offence unto me, i.e.* Thou art My stumbling-block, suggesting, as My disciple, yielding to My chief temptation.

**34. Called the people.** For crowds followed here also in this strange land. He tells them that as Christ's cross is before His crown, so is the Christian's.

**Cross.** The first mention of the death He was to die; the most painful and disgraceful way of putting to death. The cross meant then what the gallows means now. *His* cross implies that the world has a cross for every Christian. Luke says, *Take up his cross daily*. To follow Christ implied continuous and entire self-sacrifice. The Romans were accustomed to compel criminals to carry the cross on which they were to be crucified to the place of execution. The Galileans to whom He spoke would understand the dread significance of the word, for they had seen hundreds of their countrymen crucified after the fierce Galilean revolts which had preceded the ministry of Jesus. "Christ's cross is the sweetest burden that I ever bore; it is such a burden as wings are to a bird, or sails to a ship, to carry me forward to my harbour" (Rutherford).

**35. Shall lose it.** Our Lord uses these solemn words of warning on at least four separate occasions: (1) In His charge to the disciples (Matt. x. 39); (2) in this passage with the corresponding texts in Matthew (xvi. 25) and Luke (ix. 24); (3) in His discourse on the coming of the kingdom to the Pharisees in Perea (Luke xvii. 33); (4) in His prediction of His death in the temple after the Greeks sought to see Him (John xii. 25). The Greek word for life (translated in ver. 37, *life*; and in vers. 38 and 39, *soul*) has a great variety of meaning, embracing every form of life from the merest vegetable existence up to the spiritual life of an immortal soul. It has two meanings in this passage; in ver. 35 it means the natural earthly existence; in vers. 36 and 37, the higher spiritual life.

**37. In exchange for.** The earthly-minded man buys the world, and his own soul is the price he pays for it. "How poor a price is all the craft and pleasure of this life to hire a man by sin to lose his salvation!" (Baxter). "True, life is sweet, and death is bitter; but eternal death is more bitter, and eternal life is more sweet" (Hooper).

**38. Shall be ashamed of me.** The temptation to be ashamed of Jesus is

and sinful generation ; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.

CHAP. IX. 1 And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power.<sup>1</sup>

- 2 And after six days Jesus taketh *with him* Peter, and James, and John, and leadeth them up into an high mountain apart
- 3 by themselves : and he was transfigured before them. And

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<sup>1</sup> There be some here of them that stand by, which shall in no wise taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God come with power.

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one of the most trying that *young Christians* have to face, and Christ warns us of it. Satan conceals the worst, and tells his followers of the pleasure only ; Christ is not afraid to tell His followers the worst, for there is better to win than the worst to endure.

IX. 1. *The kingdom of God come.* Various explanations of this phrase have been given : (1) *The Transfiguration*, seen by Peter, James, and John ; (2) *Pentecost* and the progress of the gospel afterwards, seen by the eleven ; (3) *The destruction of Jerusalem*, which is spoken of as a type of the future advent, seen by John and perhaps by Philip. All three may be right ; for what Christ promised was such a vision as would produce assurance of the triumph of His kingdom.

7. *Retirement to the mountain range of Hermon—The Transfiguration*, ix. 2-13 : Luke ix. 28-36 ; Matt. xvii. 1-13.

2. *After six days.* Luke says *about an eight days after*. "This is merely the inclusive reckoning which Luke saw in his written sources, and means exactly the same as 'after six days' in Mark" (Farrar).

*High mountain.* Mount Hermon was the great northern landmark of Palestine ; its great peak was snow-capped (Ps. lxxxix. 12). An old tradition made the top of Tabor the scene of the transfiguration ; but during the time of our Lord, Tabor was covered by a fortress, and besides, all evidence goes to show that Jesus was in the neighbourhood of Cæsarea Philippi. Hermon is within six days' journey of the city, and it is *the* mountain of the neighbourhood. It was 10,000 feet high, and was visible from every part of Palestine, ending the view northward. Its old name was *Sirion* (Deut. iii. 9), the breastplate, from its shining, pale-blue, snow-capped cone.

Contrast the scene of this high mountain and that on another, when Satan showed Jesus all the kingdoms of the world and their glory.

*Transfigured* ; same word as in 2 Cor. iii. 18. Our Lord had been at prayer (Luke ix. 29), and the disciples wake to see Him gloriously changed ; His fashion of countenance altered (Luke ix. 29) ; His raiment became white as the light (Matt. xvii. 2), like snow, whiter than the art of man could make it. The disciples, who had a few days before been *told* about the *cross*, now *saw* the heavenly *glory* of Christ. Jesus shows here that He had power in Himself to take His glory, had He willed ; hence His resolve to suffer was of His free will.

his raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow;<sup>1</sup> so  
 4 as no fuller on earth can white them. And there appeared  
 unto them Elias with Moses: and they were talking with  
 5 Jesus. And Peter answered and said to Jesus, Master, it is  
 good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles;<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> garments became glistening, exceeding white

<sup>2</sup> booths

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“Mark borrows one image from the world of nature, another from that of man’s art and device; by these he struggles to set forth and reproduce for his readers the transcendent brightness of that light which now arrayed, from head to foot, the person of the Lord, breaking forth from within, and overflowing the very garments He wore; until in their eyes who beheld, He seemed to clothe Himself with light, as with a garment” (Trench). The Transfiguration took place after Jesus had been at solitary prayer (Luke ix. 28).

**3. Shining.** The word is applied to—(1) the glitter of arms or of polished surfaces; (2) the flashing of lightning; (3) the twinkling of stars, and is therefore peculiarly expressive. Matthew compares the whiteness of the robes of Jesus to the *light*; Mark, to the snow; and Mark and Luke, in the word they use, to the sheen of lightning.

**Fuller**, one whose trade was to clean linen clothes, giving them a peculiar whiteness by means of fuller’s earth (2 Kings xviii. 17; Isa. vii. 3; Mal. iii. 2).

It was Christ incarnate who was transfigured, and therefore His people have the promise of participation in His glory. He shall change our vile bodies, that they may become like His glorious Body. “We are not so sure of death as of transfiguration; all the days of our appointed time we will therefore wait till our changing shall come” (Hall).

**4. Elias with Moses.** The representatives of the Old Testament, of the law and the prophets (Matt. vii. 12); the two greatest men of the Old Testament. Their presence was an answer to the charges of the scribes that Jesus was destroying the law.

**Talking with Jesus** about His decease at Jerusalem. The death the disciples could not bear to think of was known in heaven. “No synod on earth was ever more gloriously attended than this, no assembly was ever more illustrious. Here is God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. Here are Moses and Elias, the chief of the prophets. Here are Peter, James, and John, the chief of the apostles” (Brenz).

**5. It is good for us to be here.** “If any earthly place or condition might have given warrant to Peter’s motion, this was it. Here was a hill, the emblem of heaven; here were two saints, the epitome of heaven; here was Christ, the God of heaven” (Hall). Better to be there than to be rejected of the Jews and to be slain, Peter thought.

**Let us make three tabernacles.** The best reading in Matthew is, “Let *me* make three tabernacles.” Peter impetuously wished to do all the work himself.

**Tabernacles**, little booths or huts, such as were constructed for the feast of Tabernacles, made out of branches of trees or bushes. Peter and his fellows were so taken with the sight of the felicity they saw, that they desired to abide on the mount with Jesus and the saints. What moved them shows what will

6 one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. For he  
 7 wist not what to say ; for they were sore afraid.<sup>1</sup> And there  
 was a cloud that overshadowed them :<sup>2</sup> and a voice came out  
 of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son : hear him.  
 8 And suddenly, when they had looked round about, they saw  
 no man any more, save Jesus only with themselves.

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<sup>1</sup> For he wist not what to answer, for they became sore afraid.

<sup>2</sup> And there came a cloud overshadowing them

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delight us when this transient world is over, and God will gather His people to Himself. Here was but Hermon, and there will be heaven ; here were but two saints, there the mighty multitude no man can number ; here was but Christ transfigured, there He will sit at the right hand of God, enthroned in the majesty of heaven ; here was a representation for a brief interval, there a gift and permanent possession of blessedness.

6. **Wist, knew.** Peter was as a man who dreamed ; he spoke, but only half knowing what he said ; as dazed with the vision of glory,—Jesus between Moses and Elijah, as he was afterwards to be with the vision of woe,—Jesus between the two thieves on Calvary.

**Sore afraid,** as Moses was when he saw the glory of God in Horeb, and exclaimed, “I exceedingly fear and quake” (Heb. xii. 21) ; as Isaiah was when he saw the Lord in vision sitting on a throne high and lifted up, and cried out, “Woe is me ! for I am undone” (Isa. vi. 5) ; as John was in Patmos, who, when he saw one like unto the Son of man, “fell at his feet as dead” (Rev. i. 17).

7. **A cloud.** A glorious shining cloud (the Shechinah) covered them. Moses, Elias, and Jesus faded into it ; the Father’s voice was heard ; the disciples, terror-stricken like the Israelites in presence of the same Shechinah at Sinai, fell prone on their faces (Matt. xvii. 6) ; then Jesus came and touched them, and they were again alone with Him. St. Peter tells us the scene in 2 Pet. i. 16–18 ; St. John, in John i. 14 and in 1 John i. 1.

**A voice came out of the cloud.** One of the three heavenly voices which spoke of Christ during His public ministry : (1) at His baptism : *Thou art My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased* (i. 11) ; (2) at His transfiguration : *This is My beloved Son, hear Him* (ix. 7) ; (3) in the temple court, before His seizure, when all was ready for the final sacrifice : *I have both glorified it (My name), and will glorify it* (John xii. 28). The first at the beginning of His ministry, the call to His work, the dedication of the Son by the Father ; the second at the chief crisis of His earthly wanderings, when the work of suffering begins to overshadow preaching ; the third before His final rejection and crucifixion. Compare i. 11.

**My beloved Son ;** rather, *My chosen Son*. “In the words themselves of this majestic installation, there is a remarkable honouring of the Old Testament, and of it in all its parts, which can scarcely be regarded as accidental ; for the three several clauses of that salutation are drawn severally from the Psalms (Ps. ii. 7), the prophets (Isa. xlii. 1), and the law (Deut. xviii. 15) ; and together they proclaim Him concerning whom they are spoken to be the king, the prophet, and the priest of the new covenant” (Trench). This voice made a wonderful impression on Peter, who speaks of it in terms of reverent awe. It came, he says, from the most excellent glory ; and by it James, John,

- 9 And as they came down from the mountain, he charged them that they should tell no man what things they had seen,  
 10 till the Son of man were risen from the dead. And they kept that saying with themselves, questioning one with another  
 11 what the rising from the dead should mean. And they asked him, saying, Why say the scribes that Elias must first come?<sup>1</sup>  
 12 And he answered and told them, Elias verily cometh first, and restoreth all things: and how it is written of the Son of man, that he must suffer many things, and be set at nought.  
 13 But I say unto you, That Elias is indeed come, and they have

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<sup>1</sup> the scribes say that Elijah must first come

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and Peter were admitted into the secret and holy mysteries of heaven (2 Pet. i. 16-18).

8. **They saw no man any more, save Jesus only.** Matthew relates that at the voice the disciples fell prone on their faces, then Jesus came and touched them, and suddenly raising their faces and gazing round, they found themselves alone with their Master (Matt. xvii. 6-8). Jesus, who came to fulfil the law and the prophets, remained to them when Moses and Elijah had departed. "Hence it is evident that He who is to be heard is the Son, not Moses nor Elijah" (Bengel). The Son remained to be heard and listened to, and this made emphatic the voice, *Hear ye Him*. The command was needed now that Jesus had begun to speak openly about His death; for His interpretation and way of fulfilling law and prophecy ran counter to the crude Messianic hopes of the disciples and of the Jewish nation.

9. **They came down from the mountain.** "Let us thank God for daily bread, and not expect a continued feast on this side heaven" (Matt. Henry).

**Tell no man what things they had seen.** "The vision," Matthew says; "those things which they had seen," Luke says. They were to tell no man till after the resurrection, for they did not yet understand what they had seen; the Transfiguration was but a foreshadowing of the Ascension, and the one could not be understood without the other.

10. **Dead should mean.** All Christ's people shall see Him in His glory as He was on the mountain, and seeing Him shall be glorified like Moses and Elijah; and this comes to pass through that very death, and that rising from the dead which Peter could not understand. Mark is the only Evangelist who tells us about the perplexity of the disciples, and their questioning among themselves. They all believed in the resurrection. What troubled them was this prominence given to death and rising again at the very moment when Moses, Elijah, and the very God of glory had proclaimed Jesus to be the Messiah. They could not connect the two thoughts of Messiah and death.

11. **Elias must first come.** The disciples were in presence of two great truths, Christ's death and His glory. They did not understand them, and they turned away to perplex themselves with a small scriptural difficulty. Jesus answers by telling them that the same scriptures which foretold Elijah's coming also predicted a suffering Saviour.

13. **Elias is indeed come.** The word translated *indeed* really means *and*. The best translation seems to be, *Elijah is come too*, implying that another had come also. As if our Lord had said, You have accepted Me as the Messiah

done unto him whatsoever they listed, as it is written of him.

- 14 And when he came to *his* disciples, he saw a great multitude about them, and the scribes questioning with them.  
 15 And straightway all the people, when they beheld him, were  
 16 greatly amazed, and, running to *him*, saluted him. And he  
 17 asked the scribes,<sup>1</sup> What question ye with them? And one of the multitude answered and said, Master, I have brought

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<sup>1</sup> them

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that should come, and you have heard that I am so ; let not that difficulty you suggest try your newly-formed faith. The forerunner is also come, as was predicted.

*What they listed, what they pleased, what their lusts prompted them to.*

**As it is written of him.** Commentators have found some difficulty with this clause. To what does it refer?—to the coming of John, or to the treatment he was to receive at the hands of the Jews? If to the latter, where are the predictions? The simplest explanation seems to be that Mark was really thinking of the coming of John, and that as he paid no great attention to style, he misplaced the clause.

8. *The demoniac boy*, ix. 14-29 : Matt. xvii. 14-21 ; Luke ix. 37-43.

**14. Scribes questioning.** This was why Jesus and the three disciples could not remain on the Mount of Transfiguration ; there was work for them in the world of pain and sin. "Hardly such another contrast can be found in the Gospels as this, between the open heaven and sons of glory on the mount, and the valley beneath with its terrible forms of misery, pain, and unbelief" (Stier). This contrast is wonderfully depicted in Raphael's great picture of the Transfiguration—on the mountain all is calm, bright, and heavenly ; in the vale below all is suffering, human passion, humiliating failure to cure.

**15. Greatly amazed.** Why? Some say Jesus' face, like Moses', retained some traces of the celestial glory ; but Jesus had commanded secrecy, and would not Himself reveal what He wished kept secret. The disciples were in great distress. A lunatic boy, fearfully tormented, had been brought to them ; their Lord had given them power over evil spirits, yet they were powerless ; the scribes were scoffing ; the people excited. Just then Jesus appeared. The Lord comes at the right time always to help His disciples. He came down on the lake when the disciples were enveloped in the storm of wind : He comes down now when His disciples were overborne by the violence of demoniac possession and by the jeers of the scribes.

**16. He asked the scribes.** The better reading is, *And He asked them*. Jesus with the three came forward to the crowd, who, parting, allowed Him to pass to their centre. He heard and saw the commotion, and put the question indiscriminately.

**What question ye with them?** The word *them* in the question means the disciples. What is the cause of this commotion in the midst of which my disciples are being taunted? Jesus saw His disciples harassed and worried, and came to their aid.

**17. One of the multitude.** Mark is as usual more graphic than the other

18 unto thee my son, which hath a dumb spirit; and wheresoever he taketh him, he teareth him,<sup>1</sup> and he foameth, and gnasheth with his teeth,<sup>2</sup> and pineth away: and I spake to thy disciples that they should cast him out; and they could  
 19 not. He answereth him, and saith, O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you?<sup>3</sup>  
 20 bring him unto me. And they brought him unto him: and when he saw him, straightway the spirit tare him; and he fell  
 21 on the ground, and wallowed, foaming. And he asked his father, How long is it ago since this came unto him? And he  
 22 said, Of a child. And oftentimes it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters, to destroy him: but if thou canst do any  
 23 thing, have compassion on us, and help us. Jesus said unto

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<sup>1</sup> and wheresoever it taketh him, it dasheth him down

<sup>2</sup> and grindeth his teeth

<sup>3</sup> bear with you

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Evangelists. He records the *amazement* of the crowd at the appearance of Jesus at the very time when His presence was needed by His disciples; the prompt question of Jesus; the fact that the father of the demoniac had meant to bring his boy to Jesus, but had only found His disciples; and that the boy was dumb.

**My son.** He was an only son. See Luke ix. 38.

**A spirit.** Mark and Luke dwell on the supernatural side of the diseases, while Matthew gives the natural description. The case described has all the features of an aggravated form of epilepsy or epileptic lunacy. The boy cries out, is convulsed, foams at the mouth, clenches his teeth, and pines away.

19. **How long shall I be with you?** etc. These words were addressed (1) to the father, (2) to the disciples, (3) to the crowd, and (4) through them to the whole people. There is a day of grace which may pass away.

20. **They brought him.** Jesus does not cure all at once. He has not only to cast out the devil, but to tell His disciples, the multitude, and all future generations how the devil can be cast out: (1) He makes the father tell the case, *confession*; (2) acknowledge God's power; (3) and manifest faith.

**And he fell down.** Mark's narrative is fuller than that of the other Evangelists. From their combined description, it is evident that this boy's possession was epileptic lunacy of the deadliest and most terrible kind. No worse case was ever brought to the Saviour. Mr. Caldwell, in a remarkable paper on demoniac possession, contributed to the *Contemporary Review* of 1876, gives strange parallels in cases like this which he has seen in India, and which he is inclined to ascribe to more than merely natural disease.

21. **Of a child.** From infancy this only son had been in this terrible state, liable to sudden fits of "possession," and when in them in continual danger of losing his life.

22. **Have compassion on us, and help us.** The father made himself one with the child. Whatever was done to his boy was done to him: the sufferings of his son were his sufferings. Yet people say that atonement through

him, If thou canst believe, all things *are* possible to him that  
 24 believeth.<sup>1</sup> And straightway the father of the child cried out,  
 and said with tears, Lord, I believe ; help thou mine unbelief.  
 25 When Jesus saw that the people came running together, he  
 rebuked the foul spirit, saying unto him, *Thou* dumb and deaf  
 spirit, I charge thee, come out of him, and enter no more into  
 26 him. And *the spirit* cried, and rent<sup>2</sup> him sore, and came out  
 of him : and he was as one dead ; insomuch that many said,  
 27 He is dead. But Jesus took him by the hand, and lifted  
 28 him up ; and he arose. And when he was come into the  
 house, his disciples asked him privately, Why could not we

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<sup>1</sup> Jesus said unto him, If thou canst ! All things are possible to him that believeth.

<sup>2</sup> convulsed

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substitution is unnatural and illogical ! If earthly fathers feel so, how must our Father who is in heaven yearn over His children, a prey to "possession," and daily when under the control of sin sent into terrible dangers and temptations !

23. **If thou canst believe ;** R. V., "*If thou canst ! All things are possible,*" etc. Jesus said, "As for thy If Thou canst ! All things are possible to him that believeth ; the question is not what deed I can do, but what faith *you* can have." The father's faith had not been very strong to begin with, and the failure of the disciples had made it weaker. Unbelief is the greatest sin, hinders the greatest works of God, and plunges the soul in condemnation. Jesus tried to rekindle faith in the struggling soul, and in the end He did a double miracle ; He cast the devil out of the father's heart, and out of the child's body.

24. **Help thou.** The little spark of faith kindled in his soul made him see how dark and deep his unbelief was, yet he had the beginnings of faith. "If thou grip Christ ever so weakly, He will not let thee perish" (Adams). Jesus does not ask that our love should equal His, but that it should *resemble* it : not that it should be of the same strength, but of the same *kind*.

25. **Rebuked the unclean spirit.** The words of Jesus in administering this rebuke are unusually emphatic, as if He felt and made known the gravity of the case and of the occasion. The crowd came running together, the boy had taken another fit, the distracted father was at his wit's end. Jesus could not prolong the scene, and His exorcism came with special distinctness and emphasis.

26. **And rent him sore.** There was one last struggle before the final cure. "The kingdom of Satan in small and great, is ever stirred into a fiercer activity by the coming near of the kingdom of Christ. Satan has great wrath when his time is short" (Trench).

28. **Why could not we cast him out ?** It was part of their commission to do it. Jesus had given them power over such "possessed" people. He had given them "power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases" (Luke ix. 1), and "over unclean spirits" (Mark vi. 7) ; they had exercised this power with success at an earlier time, and had been able to "cast out many devils" (Mark vi. 13).



- 29 cast him out? And he said unto them, This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting.<sup>1</sup>  
 30 And they departed thence, and passed through Galilee;  
 31 and he would not that any man should know *it*. For he taught his disciples, and said unto them, The Son of man is delivered into the hands of men, and they shall kill him;  
 32 and after that he is killed, he shall rise the third day.<sup>2</sup> But

<sup>1</sup> his disciples asked him privately, *saying*, We could not cast it out. And he said unto them, This kind can come out by nothing save by prayer.

<sup>2</sup> and when he is killed, after three days he shall rise again

29. **This kind.** (1) Some evil spirits are more malicious and powerful than others (Matt. xii. 45); (2) the faith which is effectual must be continually exercised (*a*) by prayer, (*b*) by keeping the body in subjection. "When faith reaches the will of God, and entering into it settles itself there, it has laid hold of omnipotence" (Morison).

9. *Return through Galilee*—*The second prediction of the Passion*, ix. 30-32 : Matt. xvii. 22, 23; Luke ix. 43-45.

30. **Through Galilee.** See Map, p. 45 and p. 47. Our Lord left Hermon and the neighbourhood of Cæsarea Philippi, and returned to Capernaum. As He wished to avoid notice, He probably went from Hermon westwards, skirting the foot of Lebanon, and then turned down southwards through the north of Galilee, taking the most unfrequented paths : or He went down the east side of the Jordan, and crossed the river by a bridge just below Lake Huleh or the Waters of Merom.

31. **For he taught his disciples.** The particle *for* explains why He did not wish that any man should know His route or where He was (see verse 30). He meant to spend the time in the uninterrupted teaching of His disciples, not merely the Twelve, but all who remained faithful. The sense of the Greek is that He kept teaching, that He constantly spoke about His approaching betrayal, death, burial, and rising again. The end of His work was near at hand, and He spent all His time in trying to prepare His followers for the events.

32. **They understood not the saying.** This sentence is given both by Mark and Luke. It was almost impossible to get them to abandon their cherished dreams of an earthly kingdom; they still desired salvation without atonement. It is difficult for us to see how the disciples could misunderstand the explicit declarations of Jesus constantly repeated about His death and rising again. We should remember, however, how deeply seated their expectation of a glorious conquering Messiah was, and how very difficult it is to make men whose minds are full of one idea take in another. None are so blind as those who will not see. Besides, Jesus had been accustomed to speak in parables, and it may be that the disciples thought that those constant allusions to a mysterious death, burial, and rising again were metaphors of a glorious, visible kingdom to rise suddenly out of present debasements. The resurrection and the descent of the Holy Ghost were required to give them a living sense of the real meaning of the kingdom, and the *sudden* change from earlier shrinking ignorance and incapacity to a clear knowledge

they understood not that saying,<sup>1</sup> and were afraid to ask him.

- 33 And he came to Capernaum : and, being in the house,<sup>2</sup> he asked them, What was it that ye disputed among yourselves  
34 by the way?<sup>3</sup> But they held their peace : for by the way they had disputed among themselves, who *should be* the  
35 greatest.<sup>4</sup> And he sat down, and called the twelve, and saith

<sup>1</sup> the saying                      <sup>2</sup> when he was in the house

<sup>3</sup> What were ye reasoning in the way?

<sup>4</sup> one with another in the way who was the greatest

of the real meaning of Jesus' mission, and to a boldness in proclaiming it, is one of the strongest proofs of the reality of those two great events.

**Were afraid to ask him.** Was the repeated statement of Jesus beginning to tell upon them, were they afraid that perhaps these sayings were no parable after all, and did they wilfully refrain from asking lest the unwelcome truth should be forced upon their unwilling minds? Men sometimes act in this fashion, and refuse to ask lest they may hear what they do not wish to know.

#### VI. NINTH SOJOURN IN CAPERNAUM, ix. 33-50.

1. *The disciples taught humility, 33-37 :* Matt. xviii. 1-10 ;  
Luke ix. 46-48.

33. **Capernaum.** Mark omits the incident of the tribute-money (Matt. xvii. 24-27), which in Matthew's Gospel comes immediately before the discourse on humility, and is expressly connected with it. It may be that their hopes were again raised by the incident, and by Jesus' words, "*Then are the children free.*" It did not become the Son, the Messiah, to pay tribute to His Father, the Messiah to be a tributary in His own kingdom. Jesus had again unmistakably proclaimed His kingship, and their thoughts at once reverted to their old dream of an earthly monarchy.

34. **Who should be the greatest.** Who should take the chief place in the new Messianic kingdom which they expected would be set up. The unseemly dispute was renewed at the Last Supper (Luke xxii. 24-26), and indeed the ambitious thought was more than once in the minds of the disciples. The fact that these disputes did take place shows that our Lord had not given any real recognised pre-eminence to Peter in the conversation on the road to Cæsarea Philippi.

35. **He sat down,** the posture for solemn teaching. "If there was any primacy among the apostles (as of Peter), why was Christ here silent about it?" (Beza). The rule of the kingdom is, *Use thyself for others*. In the kingdom of humility there is no contention : the more humble and simple we are, the nearer are we to the Saviour. Maclear asks readers to notice the many graphic touches in Mark's narrative here : (1) Jesus *sat down*, (2) He *called the Twelve to Him*, (3) He *took a little child and placed it in the midst of them*, (4) He took it *into His arms*, or, as Luther says, pressed it to His heart, (5) and then He spoke to them. An old legend, probably derived from the fact that the martyr told Trajan that he carried God in his heart, and that Christians afterwards called him Christophoros, declares that child was Ignatius.

unto them, If any man desire to be first, *the same* shall be  
 35 last of all, and servant of all. And he took a child, and set  
 him in the midst of them : and when he had taken him in  
 37 his arms, he said unto them, Whosoever shall receive one of  
 such children<sup>1</sup> in my name, receiveth me : and whosoever  
 shall receive me, receiveth not me, but him that sent me.  
 38 And John answered him, saying, Master, we saw one cast-  
 ing out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us : and we  
 39 forbade him, because he followeth not us.<sup>2</sup> But Jesus said,  
 Forbid him not : for there is no man which shall do a miracle  
 40 in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me.<sup>3</sup> For he that  
 41 is not against us is on our part. For whosoever shall give

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<sup>1</sup> little children

<sup>2</sup> in thy name, and we forbade him, because he followed not us

<sup>3</sup> which shall do a mighty work in my name, and be able quickly to speak evil of me

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2. *The disciples taught tolerance, 38-50 : Luke ix. 49, 50.*

38. **In thy name.** The incident was suggested to John probably by the words "*in my name*" (ver. 37). "We gather from this passage how mightily the words and influence of Christ had worked outside the sphere of His permanent dependants, exciting in individuals a degree of spiritual energy that performed miracles on others" (Meyer).

**He followed not us.** John does not say, "*He followed not Thee.*" He was a disciple of Christ, but not one of those who went about with the Master. John spoke intolerantly, and was rebuked by Jesus. "Better a thousand times that the work of warring against Satan should be done by other hands than not done at all. Happy is he who knows something of the spirit of Moses when he said, '*Would God that all the Lord's people were prophets,*' and of Paul when he said, '*If Christ is preached, I rejoice, yea and will rejoice*'" (Ryle).

39. **Forbid him not.** No one working in good faith in Christ's name is to be forbidden, though he works by different methods than we do.

40. **He that is not against us is for us.** In Matt. xii. 30, Jesus said, *He who is not with Me is against Me.* Renan declares that the sayings are contradictory, "two irreconcilable rules of proselytism, evoked by a passionate struggle." They are, however, two tests to be applied in quite different circumstances ; by the one we are to test our own devotion to Christ, by the other we are to test the judgments we are apt to pass on neighbours. The one is for ourselves, the other for others. In the one the believer is alone in the presence of Christ, in the other he is one of the many who make up the visible fellowship of the faithful. In the one rule Jesus says *He* and *Me*, in the other He says *He* and *Us*. There is no neutrality possible in the one case, we must be on Christ's side or against Him, it is a matter of life or death with each individual believer. In the other there is a fellowship, a commonwealth ; with the fundamental principle in all commonwealths, that men must give and take.

41. **For whosoever ;** R. V., *For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to*

you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ,<sup>1</sup> verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward.  
 42 And whosoever shall offend one of *these* little ones that believe in me, it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about  
 43 his neck,<sup>2</sup> and he were cast into the sea. And if thy hand offend thee,<sup>3</sup> cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire  
 44 that never shall be quenched:<sup>4</sup> where their worm dieth not,  
 45 and the fire is not quenched.<sup>5</sup> And if thy foot offend thee,<sup>3</sup> cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never  
 46 shall be quenched: where their worm dieth not, and the fire

<sup>1</sup> a cup of water to drink because ye are Christ's

<sup>2</sup> And whosoever shall cause one of these little ones that believe on me to stumble, it were better for him if a great millstone were hanged about his neck

<sup>3</sup> cause thee to stumble

<sup>4</sup> into the unquenchable fire

<sup>5</sup> omit verse 44

*drink because ye are Christ's.* If so simple a service shall be rewarded, how much more casting out devils! "Life affords few opportunities of doing great services for others, but there is scarcely an hour of the day that does not afford us the opportunity of performing some little, it may be unnoticed, kindness" (Bower).

42. **Millstone;** R. V., *And whosoever shall cause one of these little ones that believe on me to stumble, it were better for him if a great millstone.* The word translated *millstone*, or *great millstone*, means really *ass-millstone*, a millstone so large as to be turned by an ass. It was a Roman punishment to drown criminals by tying a great stone to the neck and throwing them into the sea. This manner of death is mentioned by Plutarch, Juvenal, and others. It was reckoned almost as degrading as crucifixion.

43. **Offend thee, cause thee to stumble, lead thee into sin.** "Our Lord makes special mention of the hand, the foot, the eye, those members whereby we do amiss, or walk astray, or gaze on what is sinful" (Maclear).

**Into hell, into Gehenna,** the valley of Hinnom literally; but the Jews applied the name of this valley to the *place of torment*.

44. **Where their worm;** Isa. lxvi. 24: "And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcases of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh." This last verse in Isaiah describes a double kind of destruction,—one from within, *the worm*; and one from without, *the fire*,—the one destroying bodies buried, the other bodies burnt. The phrases contain a graphic picture of a decay or a destruction which does not end. Verses 44 and 46 should be omitted, as they do not seem to have been part of the original text.

45. **It is better to enter halt into life.** "The meaning is not that every man is in such a case, that he hath no better way to avoid sin and hell; but if a man had no better, he should choose this. Nor does it mean that maimed persons are maimed in heaven; but if it were so, it were a less evil" (Baxter).

47 is not quenched.<sup>1</sup> And if thine eye offend thee,<sup>2</sup> pluck it out : it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire :  
 48 where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.  
 49 For every one shall be salted with fire, and every sacrifice  
 50 shall be salted with salt. Salt is good : but if the salt have lost his saltness, wherewith will ye season it? Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another.

<sup>1</sup> omit verse 46<sup>2</sup> cause thee to stumble

49. For every one shall be salted, etc. This is one of the most difficult verses in the New Testament. Perhaps Dr. Morison's explanation is the simplest. The reference, he says, is to the pervading idea of vers. 43-48, that all who would escape the retribution of unextinguishable fire must be unsparing in their treatment of those members of their bodies which lead them into temptation. The Saviour, therefore, addressing His disciples, commands them to cut off unsparingly whatever will lead them into temptation, and thus escape the doom of those who are ensnared. The process is painful, but not penal ; it purifies. Christ's disciples are to be preserved from corruption by fire, *i.e.* by fiery trials endured for righteousness' sake ; and thus the fire is the unsparing spirit of self-sacrifice, that parts for righteousness' sake with a hand, a foot, an eye. Every disciple of Christ's is salted with fire. He is preserved from corruption and consequent everlasting destruction by the fire of unsparing self-sacrifice.

**Every sacrifice, etc.** "Every true self-sacrifice presented to God, if presented in a state of comparative purity, sweetness, and consequent acceptableness, in virtue of the purity-imparting spirit of the sacrifice, is salted with salt" (Morison).

**50. If the salt become saltless.** It was believed that salt might lose its savour from exposure, and Maundrell assures us that he tasted rock-salt which from exposure had lost its saltness.

Mark omits between ix. 50 and x. 1 the narrative of an interval of not less than three months :—

- (1) *Jesus' journey to Jerusalem to the feast of Tabernacles—The secrecy of His journey—The people ask, Where is He?—Jesus appears in the temple, and teaches—The Jews wish to arrest Him—Nicodemus' plea—The adulteress brought to Him—The attempts to stone Him—He heals a man blind from birth—The parable of the Good Shepherd (John vii. 2-x. 21).*
- (2) *Jesus' return to Galilee.*
- (3) *Jesus' Last Journey to Jerusalem—He attempts to go by Samaria—His repulse at a Samaritan village—He retires to another village, probably within the Galilean frontier—He sends out the Seventy to prepare His way (Luke ix. 51-x. 24).*

CHAP. X. 1 And he arose from thence and cometh into the  
coasts of Judea by the farther side of Jordan : and the people  
resort unto him again ; and, as he was wont, he taught them  
2 again. And the Pharisees came to him, and asked him, Is it  
3 lawful for a man to put away *his* wife? tempting him. And  
he answered and said unto them, What did Moses command  
4 you? And they said, Moses suffered to write a bill of divorce-  
5 ment, and to put *her* away. And Jesus answered and said

## B. PERIOD OF WORK IN THE PEREA AND IN JUDEA.

*From Feast of Tabernacles to beginning of Passion week— a period of  
six months.*

### I. JESUS IN THE PEREA, X. 1-31.

1. **From thence.** The chronology of the last six months of our Lord's ministry is of great and admitted difficulty ; for the order adopted, see Analysis, p. 37. Our Lord having gone up to Jerusalem to the feast of Tabernacles, and having returned to Galilee, now left that scene of His ministry for the last time. He tried to go through Samaria, was repulsed, went by the borderland of Galilee and Samaria to the Jordan ford at Bethshean, and having previously sent out the seventy to go before Him, began a preaching tour in the Perea. *Thence, i.e.* from the village in Galilee to which He had retired on His repulse in Samaria. Mark resumes the narrative when our Lord had arrived in the Perea.

**And the people resort.** Jesus no longer shunned observation : crowds came round Him again, and He began to teach in His old fashion.

#### 1. *Marriage and divorce, x. 2-12 : Matt. xix. 3-12.*

2. **To put away his wife** (*for every cause*, Matt. xix. 3). Our Lord was again in the country over which Herod Antipas ruled, who had divorced his wife in order to marry his own niece, the wife of his brother Herod Philip, and the Pharisees sought to set Herod against Jesus (vi. 17, 18). The question was one which divided the Pharisees : the disciples of Hillel wished to make divorce easy, and said that a man could divorce His wife for *any* dislike he might have to her ; the followers of Shammai held that only notorious unchastity could be the ground of divorce. The words recorded in Matthew, *for every cause*, are most important. The whole question is about that unlimited right to divorce which was undermining morals in Judea as well as throughout the Roman Empire at that time.

3. **He answered by appealing (1) to the law of Moses which they professed to observe, (2) to the moral law which was behind it.**

**What did Moses command you?** The argument is more fully given in Matt. xix. 3-9, where Jesus' question reveals more strikingly the difference between the Pharisees and Moses.

4. **Moses suffered to write a bill of divorcement.** See Deut. xxiv. 1-2 : "*When a man hath taken a wife, and married her, and it come to pass that she find no favour in his eyes, because he hath found some uncleanness in her: then let him write her a bill of divorcement, and give it her in her hand, and send her out of his house. And when she is departed out of his house, she may*

unto them, For the hardness of your heart<sup>1</sup> he wrote you this  
6 precept. But from the beginning of the creation God made  
7 them male and female.<sup>2</sup> For this cause shall a man leave his  
8 father and mother, and cleave to his wife; and they twain<sup>3</sup>  
shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one

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<sup>1</sup> For your hardness of heart    <sup>2</sup> male and female made he them    <sup>3</sup> the twain

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*go and be another man's wife."* The Pharisees admit what Jesus seeks to bring out, that Moses did not command, but only permitted divorce; the Mosaic legislation presupposed the existence of divorce, and tried to regulate it. The *bill of divorcement* showed that divorce had to be gone about in some solemn fashion. The husband who wished to divorce—(1) had to go to a learned scribe to get the bill of divorcement written for him, and therefore divorce could never be made in the heat of passion; and (2) he had to state the grounds on which he wished the separation, and according to the law quoted they could not be quite trivial. The Mosaic law further provided for two cases of marriage where divorce was impossible—(1) where a man had dishonoured a virgin, (2) and where he had slanderously denied the virginity of his young wife (Deut. xxii. 19, 29). The Mosaic law, therefore, did not permit unlimited divorce *for every cause*, and its aim was benevolent.

5. **For the hardness of your heart.** Moses had found heathen practices among the Jews, and his laws were meant to restrain and to point them to a still better and purer state of matters; and therefore the right way to deal with the law is not to keep merely within the letter and evade the spirit, but to make it full by seeing in it the moral principles which it embodies, and by acting up to them.

7. **And cleave to his wife.** "In Gen. ii. 24, these are the words of Adam; in Matt. xix. 5, the words of God; in Mark, the words of Christ. They are the words of Adam, as uttering prophetically a Divine fundamental ordinance; they are the words of God, as being eternally valid; they are the words of Christ, as rules for Christian life re-established by Him, who 'adorned and beautified' the holy state of matrimony with His presence and first miracle at Cana of Galilee" (Maclear), and who ordained that the union between husband and wife should be an earthly picture of the union between Him and His Church.

8. **And they twain shall be one flesh.** Our Lord bases His description of marriage directly on Old Testament statements; but at the same time He always indicates that Scripture only expresses universal and natural laws in all that it says about marriage (compare ver. 6). The description commonly given both in the New Testament and in the Old of the married state, is contained in the phrase that husband and wife are *one flesh* (μία σάρξ). The term σάρξ has two principal uses in the New Testament: (1) it denotes the matter of the *body* as opposed to the soul, which meaning is absurd in the present case; and (2) the *embodied spirit*, man, as opposed to the *unembodied spirit*, God, which seems to be the meaning here. The phrase will therefore mean, that the husband and wife have such a community of end and aim in life that they are one ethical person. In the New Testament this identity of interest and aim is usually expressed as consisting in a peculiar double reciprocal relation in which the husband and wife stand to each other. It is the duty of the husband to *love* his wife; and it is the duty of the wife to obey her

9 flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man  
 10 put asunder. And in the house his disciples asked him again  
 11 of the same *matter*. And he saith unto them, Whosoever  
 shall put away his wife and marry another, committeth adultery  
 12 against her. And if a woman shall put away her husband,  
 and be married to another,<sup>1</sup> she committeth adultery.

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<sup>1</sup> And if she herself shall put away her husband and marry another

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husband (Col. iii. 18, 19; Eph. v. 22-28; 1 Pet. iii. 1-7). Thus the unity described in the phrase *one flesh* is one of function, each one of the married pair bringing its own element,—love and obedience,—out of which the union of common ends and aims is compacted. This scriptural idea of marriage given in vers. 6-8, with its phrases *male and female, man and wife, they twain*, implies—(1) that “marriage is to be between one man and one woman, and that it is not lawful for any man to have more than one wife, nor for any woman to have more than one husband at the same time;” and (2) that when a marriage has once been formed, it must not be arbitrarily broken; there must be no easy way of divorce.

9. What therefore God hath joined, let not man put asunder. The disciples were astonished at the severity with which our Lord condemned divorce. The divorce laws of the Roman Empire were scandalous, and the fruitful cause of the absence of anything like real family life and pure morals. The scribes had so multiplied reasons for divorce among the Jews, that though living under Old Testament law their divorce legislation was almost as bad as the Roman.

11. Whosoever shall put away his wife. These verses, 11 and 12, form one of the four passages which record our Lord's statement about divorce. The other three are found in Matt. v. 31, 32, xix. 3-9, Luke xvi. 18, Matt. xix. 3-9, and Mark x. 11, 12, and refer evidently to the same occasion when Jesus answers a tempting question put by the Pharisees, and record the one utterance. It is also most probable that Matt. v. 31, 32 and Luke xvi. 18 are different and independent accounts of one statement. The four passages therefore record two separate utterances made by Jesus on this subject:—

#### MATTHEW V. 31, 32.

#### LUKE XVI. 18.

It was said also, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement: but I say unto you, That every one that putteth away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, maketh her an adulteress: and whosoever shall marry her when she is put away committeth adultery.

Every one that putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and he that marrieth one that is put away from a husband committeth adultery.

#### MATTHEW XIX. 9.

#### MARK X. 11, 12.

Whosoever shall put away his wife, except for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and he that marrieth her when she is put away committeth adultery.

Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her: and if she herself shall put away her husband, and marry another, she committeth adultery.

In these passages our Lord is speaking not as a legislator, but as a moral



- 13 And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them : and *his* disciples rebuked those that brought  
 14 *them*.<sup>1</sup> But when Jesus saw *it*, he was much displeased,<sup>2</sup> and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not : for of such is the kingdom of God.  
 15 Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the king-

<sup>1</sup> rebuked them<sup>2</sup> he was moved with indignation

teacher, and is pointing out that the legal code acknowledged and supported by the Pharisees, and by others responsible, violated the fundamental moral principle of the indissolubility of marriage. But while Jesus is not making laws in these utterances of His, He lays down certain principles which must be regarded as the basis of all Christian legislation on the subject. The statements He makes in these verses seem to be :—

- (1) The man who, in conformity with the permission accorded to him in the Mosaic law, puts away his wife by giving her a bill of divorce-ment, "save for fornication," and marries another, commits adultery against his wife (Matthew, Mark, Luke).
- (2) He also causes her to commit adultery, because he puts it into her power to marry again (Matthew).
- (3) The man who marries a wife so put away, also commits adultery (Matthew, Luke).
- (4) The woman who in like fashion puts away her husband, and is married again to another, commits adultery (Mark).

From these statements Protestant theologians conclude :—

- (1) That divorce *a vinculo* is permitted, because the case brought forward is such separation as permits of the divorced marrying again.
- (2) That the dissolution of the marriage bond is permissible only because of adultery on the part of one of the married pair, or because of what is equivalent to adultery,—such wilful desertion as cannot be remedied by the Church or by the civil magistrate.

The other principles affecting this question are derived not from the Gospels, but from the words of Paul in the Epistle to the Romans. "They who are for divorcing their wives for every offence would do well to consider what would become of them if God should in like manner deal with them" (Matt. Henry).

## 2. *Blessing little children*, x. 13-16 : Matt. xix. 13-15 ; Luke xviii. 15-17.

13. **Young children.** The word used by Luke means that some of them were infants. It was customary among the Jews for mothers to ask famous teachers to lay their hands on the head of their children and bless them ; and these women who had got good from Jesus brought their children to Him.

**His disciples rebuked . . . them.** Jesus had too much work, they thought, to be troubled with children. The pious mothers knew Christ better than the disciples did.

14. **For of such is the kingdom of heaven.** The kingdom *belongs* to little children ; they are in it through grace, and will never be far from it unless they wilfully reject Christ's gospel ; if they die in infancy, they will surround the throne of the King. All Christ's servants must be as dependent and as trustful as children are. Jesus calls the youngest child to Him. In

- 16 dom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein. And he took them up in his arms, put *his* hands upon them, and blessed them.<sup>1</sup>
- 17 And when he was gone forth<sup>2</sup> into the way, there came one running, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Master,
- 18 what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life? And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? *there is none good*
- 19 but one, *that is*, God. Thou knowest the commandments,

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<sup>1</sup> and blessed them, laying his hands upon them

<sup>2</sup> As he was going forth

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the children Jesus saw, like the Psalmist (Ps. viii. 2), the fragile beginnings of a mighty end,—now infants, afterwards pillars in His temple.

16. Took them up in his arms. He was asked to touch. He took them in His arms (ix. 36); an abundant answer to their prayers. Those who come to Christ get more than they ask.

3. *The rich young ruler*, x. 17–22; Matt. xix. 16–22; Luke xviii. 18–23.

17. There came one running. The incident happened apparently when Christ was leaving the Perea. Each Evangelist adds information. Matthew alone mentions that the young ruler asked “what *good* thing” he should do. Mark alone mentions—(1) his “running and kneeling;” (2) that Jesus “loved him;” (3) the expressions, “Take up thy cross,” “Defraud not;” (4) that the ruler was “sad;” and (5) our Lord’s *looking* thrice. Luke tells us that he was a ruler or an elder in a synagogue.

Good Master. This title was never given by pupils to their teachers, and indicates, some have thought, a tone of patronage.

What shall I do. It is not by trying, but by trusting, that eternal life is inherited. Matthew has, *What good thing shall I do?* It was the great mistake of the Pharisees to think that goodness consists in fashioning the life according to a code of rules of external conduct. So this young Pharisee wished to gain the kingdom of heaven by doing some great work, or by going through a long course of outward observances.

18. Why callest thou me good? Why keep repeating this word *good*? “As if He had said, ‘Thou falsely callest me Good Master, unless thou acknowledgest that I have come from God’” (Calvin). Our Lord does not mean to deny His own perfect goodness, nor His divinity. He wishes to test the young man and see whether he has any true idea of goodness, or of what is meant by doing a really good thing. This is made plain by the best MS. reading of the narrative in Matt., “Why askest thou Me concerning good?” (R.V. Matt. xix. 17). Socinians and others who deny the divinity of Christ quote this passage erroneously. “Either, There is none good but God; Christ is good: therefore Christ is God. Or, There is none good but God; Christ is not God: therefore Christ is *not good*” (Stier). The dilemma is conclusive against all such ideas.

19. The commandments. Those quoted are all from the second table, and they are not quoted with verbal accuracy, Luke xviii. 20; Matt. xix. 18, 19. According to Matthew, the young man asked, *Which*, or, more accurately, *What sort of commandments?* He was eager to know, and probably expected some new casuist rules, some points of minute external observance which

Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honour thy father and  
 20 mother. And he answered and said unto him, Master, all  
 21 these<sup>1</sup> have I observed from my youth. Then Jesus, beholding<sup>2</sup> him, loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come,

<sup>1</sup> these things<sup>2</sup> looking upon him

he would gladly learn and practise. Instead, Jesus mentions one or two of the commonest and most commonplace commandments, forbidding murder, lust, theft, lying, and so forth. He wished to show the young ruler that there were depths of fulfilment even in these simple commandments of the Second Table which he had never dreamed of; and that he is quite unable to rise to the knowledge of that love of God which sums up the deeper commandments of the First Table, until he has fathomed the moral depths of the Second.

**Defraud not.** Either—(1) a reference to Lev. xix. 13, *Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbour, neither rob him*; or (2) “Mark’s rendering of the tenth commandment” (Horsley).

20. **Master.** Not Good Master this time.

**Have I observed.** “Go and fetch me the book of the Law,” said Rabbi Chamina on his death-bed, “and see whether there is anything in it that I have not kept” (Farrar). When God’s commandments are looked at as legal enactments to be kept only in the letter, it is as possible to keep them as to keep out of a court of justice. Our Lord spoke to the young ruler to teach him what was meant by really fulfilling the law. God requires more than irreproachable outward conduct. Paul was blameless as touching the righteousness which is in the law; and was content to lose that for Christ’s sake (Phil. iii. 6).

21. **Beholding him, looking upon him** with a significant look implying a certain yearning towards him. The meaning of the word may be gathered from the other passages in which it is used in the New Testament. It is used to describe the Baptist’s look upon Jesus when he said, *Behold the Lamb of God* (John i. 36); to describe our Lord’s looking at Peter when he first met him and called him Cephas (John i. 42), and when He looked at him from the judgment hall after Peter had denied Him (Luke xxii. 61); and to describe the glance which Jesus gave to His disciples when He spoke of the mysteries of Providence (Mark x. 27).

**Loved him.** Jesus saw much that was lovable in this young man,—his ingenuousness, his moral earnestness, his zeal for instruction. His glance penetrated the outside habits and character, appreciated all the good, and yearned over him, longing to see him with the one thing lacking.

The incident of our Lord looking and loving is recorded only by Mark.

**Sell whatsoever thou hast.** His money was what came between God and a full surrender of his heart. Jesus’ command was a test of faith, to bring out whether he did love God with *all* his heart. Hence these words of Jesus cannot be twisted to mean, that the highest Christian life implies monastic renunciation of property, or the practice of Christian Socialism. The command is not a specific rule of life for all Christians in all ages. It is rather a

- 22 take up the cross,<sup>1</sup> and follow me. And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved : for he had great possessions.<sup>2</sup>  
 23 And Jesus looked round about, and saith unto his disciples,  
 24 How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God ! And the disciples were astonished<sup>3</sup> at his words. But Jesus answereth again, and saith unto them, Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter

<sup>1</sup> omit take up the cross

<sup>2</sup> But his countenance fell at the saying, and he went away sorrowful : for he was one that had great possessions.

<sup>3</sup> amazed

particular application of the great general principle, that we should test our love to God by willingness to give up that which ties us most to the world.

**Take up the cross.** The Revised Version, following the best MS. authorities, omits these words. Mill and Tischendorf suggest that the words were first added as a marginal comment from viii. 34.

22. **He was sad.** *His countenance fell.* The word is found in Matt. xvi. 3, applied to the sky, and is there translated *lowering* or *overcast*. "A gloom came over the young man's heart, and threw its shadow on his face" (Morison). He stood in silent astonishment. He thought of the hardships of that disciple life, of the shame in the word *cross*, of the enjoyments and means of doing good which money can buy, and which he was called on to give up. He could not do it.

**For he had great possessions.** *For he was one that had great possessions,* and it was harder for him to become a poor wandering disciple than it was for others. Many commentators argue, with some show of reason, that this young ruler whom Jesus loved was Lazarus.

4. *The temptations of the rich*, x. 23-27 : Matt. xix. 23-26 ; Luke xviii. 24-27.

23. **And Jesus looked round about.** His sad loving gaze had rested on the rich young ruler who had just made the great refusal. He withdrew it, and turned to the disciples ; the words that follow are a sigh.

**How hardly shall they that have riches.** Life is as hard for the favourites of fortune, perhaps harder than it is for others. "A great fortune," said Seneca, "is a great slavery." The point that our Lord seems to insist upon is that riches are themselves a temptation. He said this to the disciples as they gazed at the young man departing, and He said it in the presence of Judas, who found a small sum of money an irresistible temptation only a few weeks later.

24. **Children, how hard is it.** The heart of our Lord, yearning after the young ruler who had made the refusal, opens to the disciples, who had chosen to follow Him and bear His cross, and He addresses them in words which express not only affection, but fellowship of the most intimate kind. They had had faith in Him ; they had gained that higher spiritual life which could only be reached by loving fellowship with Him. As He said to the sick of the palsy when He saw his faith, *Son* ; as He said to the woman with the issue of blood when she had risked all to touch Him, *Daughter* ; so He now addresses the disciples, *Children*, how hard it is (comp. John xiii. 33 and xxi. 5).

**For them that trust in riches.** This clause is omitted in many of the

25 into the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go  
 through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter  
 26 into the kingdom of God. And they were astonished out of  
 measure, saying among themselves, Who then can be saved?  
 27 And Jesus looking upon them saith, With men *it is* impossible,  
 28 but not with God: for with God all things are possible. Then  
 Peter began to say unto him, Lo, we have left all, and have  
 29 followed thee. And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say  
 unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren,  
 or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife,<sup>1</sup> or children, or lands,

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<sup>1</sup> omit or wife

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most trustworthy MS. authorities. The sentence runs in the Sinaitic and Vatican MSS., *How hard it is to enter into the kingdom of God*; and that seems to be the better reading. As the words stand in our text, Jesus utters a mere commonplace; and the omission of the words not merely removes the commonplace, but seems to carry out the original train of thought. Jesus first spoke of the difficulties of entrance into the kingdom caused by the possession of riches, then comes the affectionate address to the disciples suggested by the fact that they had chosen to follow Him and enter the kingdom, and then follows the wider thought, *How hard it is to enter the kingdom at all*.

25. **It is easier for a camel.** Unimaginative minds have found difficulties in this text: (1) some say that *camel* (kamelon) is really *cable* (kamilon); (2) others say that the "needle's eye" was the side gate in the large door for foot passengers entering a city. The verse is an Oriental proverb.

26. **Who then can be saved?** Riches with the temptations that they bring are a hindrance, and the temptations which beset the rich are only one class out of very many others. It is hard for those who have riches to enter into the kingdom; it is hard for all, for each class of people has its own temptations: Who then can be saved?

27. **With God all things.** The age of miracles of *grace* is not gone. "There is nothing too hard for Thee" (Jer. xxxii. 17). This is the thought that ought to inspire every anxious soul, every Christian worker set face to face with the sin and the misery of life, every missionary carrying the gospel to pagan lands.

5. *Self-sacrificing disciples and their reward*, 28-31: Matt. xix. 27-xx. 16; Luke xviii. 28-30.

28. **Lo, we have left all.** *How much better are we than the young ruler*, is Peter's reflection. Christ's answer brings out two things: (1) That He does not need man's work in the sense that He must pay wages for it. There is no comparison between what is given; an hundredfold will be returned. (2) That Christian work must be done in the spirit of devotion, not of calculation. Many of the first may work in a wrong spirit and become last. (3) The reward may not come in this life; the work is spiritual, so are the wages. Here follows, in Matt. xx. 1-16, the parable of *The Labourers in the Vineyard*.

29. **Or wife.** These words are omitted in the best MS. authorities.

- 30 for my sake, and the gospel's, but he shall receive an hundred-fold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in  
 31 the world to come eternal life. But many *that are* first shall be last; and the last first.
- 32 And they were in the way going up to Jerusalem; and Jesus went before them: and they were amazed; and as they followed, they were afraid. And he took again the twelve, and began to tell them what things should<sup>1</sup> happen unto him,

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<sup>1</sup> that were to happen

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For my sake and the gospel's. The reward or recompense is promised with certain qualifications. Matthew records that Peter, with his usual boldness, after recounting services, asked, *What shall we have therefore?* Jesus insists on pure motives. The sacrifice must have been made for His sake or for the gospel's; the gospel and Jesus being two separate things, and yet at bottom one.

30. **With persecutions.** This is an addition given by Mark only. The follower gets bliss an hundredfold greater, and even persecutions may be included in the list of blessings. So Paul interpreted the promise when he said, "We glory in tribulations also" (Rom. v. 3).

31. **Many that are first shall be last.** Judas became an apostate and a traitor; Saul the persecutor became the apostle who most abounded in labours.

## II.—THE LAST JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM, x. 32–52.

Mark omits between x. 31 and x. 32—

- (1) *Those portions of our Lord's work in the Perea related by Luke in chaps. xi. 1–xiii. 35, which included the delivery of the Lord's Prayer.*
- (2) *Our Lord's journey to Jerusalem to the feast of Dedication* (John x. 22).
- (3) *The visit to Martha and Mary at Bethany* (Luke x. 38–42).
- (4) *His presence in Jerusalem, and the second attempt to stone Him* (John x. 23–28).
- (5) *His flight to the Perea* (John x. 39–42)—*To Bethany beyond Jordan, where He dines with Pharisees on Sabbath—Heals man with dropsy—Parable of the supper—Parables of lost sheep, piece of silver, prodigal son, wasteful steward, rich man and Lazarus* (Luke xiv. 1–xvii. 10).
- (6) *The message that Lazarus is ill* (John xi. 1–6).
- (7) *The visit to Bethany, and the raising of Lazarus* (John xi. 7–46).
- (8) *The Jewish council summoned, and resolves to put Jesus to death* (John xi. 47–53).
- (9) *His flight to Ephraim, and His stay there till the approach of the Passover* (John xi. 54, 55).

32. **They were in the way.** Between vers. x. 31 and x. 32 there is an interval of not less than three months, during which our Lord left the Perea, went to Jerusalem, retired to the Perea again, came back to Bethany to heal Lazarus, and withdrew to Ephraim, a city of Judea. When the day of the Passover approached, our Lord left the high steep on which the town was

- 33 *saying*, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be delivered unto the chief priests, and unto the scribes; and they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him  
 34 to the Gentiles: and they shall mock him, and shall scourge him, and shall spit upon him, and shall kill him: and the third day he shall rise again.  
 35 And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came unto

built, went eastward down into the Jordan valley, and joined the crowds of pilgrims going up to the feast. See Analysis, p. 38.

"There are few pictures in the Gospels more striking than this of Jesus going forth to His death, and walking along the path into the deep valley, while behind Him, in awful reverence and mingled anticipations of dread and hope,—their eyes fixed on Him, as with bowed head He preceded them in all the majesty of sorrow,—the disciples walked behind and dared not disturb His meditations" (Farrar).

1. *The third Prediction of the Passion*, 32-34 : Matt. xx. 17-19 ;  
 Luke xviii. 31-34.

33. **The Son of man shall be delivered.** Matthew (xx. 17-19) tells us that the information was given *privately* to His disciples, and adds the words *crucify Him*. This was the third distinct prediction—(1) Mark viii. 31 ; (2) Mark ix. 30-32 ; (3) Mark x. 32-34.

In the first prediction (Mark viii. 31) Jesus spoke—(1) of *sufferings* ; (2) of *rejection* at the hands of the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, of all the recognized religious leaders of the nation ; (3) of *a violent death* ; and (4) of *resurrection after three days*. In the second, Jesus adds (Mark ix. 31) —(5) the fact of *betrayal* (the Son of man is delivered into the hands of men). In this third prediction our Lord foretells the end with every minute detail. In addition to what was given in the previous prediction, He declares—(6) that *He is to be tried and condemned by the Sanhedrin* ; (7) that He is also to undergo a *Roman trial* ; (8) that after trial He is to be subjected to all manner of contumely, *to mocking, spitting upon, and scourging* ; (9) the delivery to the Gentiles also *implied crucifixion*, and the actual statement *to crucify Him* is made by Matthew (xx. 19). Luke tells us that the disciples did not understand His words. "This saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken" (Luke xviii. 34). And John tells us of another occasion that the disciples did not understand at the first, but came to know the meaning "when Jesus was glorified" (John xii. 16). We may well believe that while Jesus was describing His sufferings, and so minutely, some of the disciples were debating among themselves about their rank in the Messianic principality which they thought would soon be established. See vers. 35-45.

2. *Place in the kingdom. Mistaken expectations*, 35-45 :  
 Matt. xx. 20-28.

35. **James and John**, with Salome their mother, Matthew adds (xx. 20). Many have supposed that a band of Jesus' most intimate Galilean friends had come from Galilee to Ephraim to join our Lord in His journey to His last Passover.

him,<sup>1</sup> saying, Master, we would that thou shouldst do for us  
 36 whatsoever we shall desire. And he said unto them, What  
 37 would ye that I should do for you? They said unto him,  
 Grant unto us that we may sit, one on thy right hand, and  
 38 the other on thy left hand, in thy glory. But Jesus said unto  
 them, Ye know not what ye ask: can ye drink of the cup  
 that I drink of? and be baptized with the baptism that I am  
 39 baptized with? And they said unto him, We can. And  
 Jesus said unto them, Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I

<sup>1</sup> And there came near unto him James and John

**Master, we would that thou shouldst do for us.** Matthew's account of the scene is for once much more graphic than Mark's. From it we learn that Salome with her two sons prostrated themselves before Jesus with the reverence due to a king, although He had just said that He was to die a slave's death, and without speaking signified that she had a request to make. Jesus asked, What wilt thou? and she, the mother, makes the request recorded by both Evangelists (Matt. xx. 20, 21). "Who can wonder to see some sparks of weak and worldly desires in their holiest teacher, when the blessed apostles were not free from some ambitious thoughts, while they sat at the feet, yea, lay in the bosom of their Saviour?" (Hall).

**37. That we may sit.** They were in the state of joyful excitement, and already saw in imagination the new earthly kingdom, so little had they understood what Jesus had been saying. They had fastened on the words "twelve thrones" (Matt. xix. 28), and could not help thinking that the kingdom they expected was near at hand (Luke xix. 11). They had not learned "no cross, no crown."

**38. Are ye able to drink the cup.** A common metaphor in the Scriptures to denote the lot which awaits one. "Awake! stand up, O Jerusalem, which hast drunk at the hand of the Lord the cup of His fury" (Isa. li. 17). It meant here those sufferings which our Lord had to pass through to finish His work of atonement. Jesus Himself in Gethsemane said, "Father, all things are possible unto Thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless not what I will, but what Thou wilt" (Mark xiv. 36; comp. John xviii. 11).

**Baptism.** The fiery trial through which Jesus was passing (ix. 49), which produced "agony" (Luke xxii. 44), but which our Lord endured, and out of which He came "perfected through sufferings" (Heb. ii. 10). His baptism was not of water, but of blood. When the disciples talked about the kingdom, the Saviour spoke about the bitter cup given Him to drink, the bloody baptism He had to undergo.

**39. We can.** There was both evil and good in the request of James and John: *evil*, because they prayed for something worldly, for a crown without a cross, for a rank which really depended, not on favour, but on service; *good*, because they did really wish to remain always near Jesus, to share His lot, to spend themselves in His service. So, while they knew not what they were asking, their request *was* granted. James was the first to win the crown of martyrdom (Acts xii. 2); John outlived the rest, and was longest in service, spending a life of suffering and work for the Master.

**Ye shall indeed drink of the cup;** rather, *The cup that I drink ye shall*



drink of;<sup>1</sup> and with the baptism that I am baptized withal  
 40 shall ye be baptized: but to sit on my right hand and on my  
 left hand is not mine to give; but *it shall be given to them* for  
 41 whom it is prepared.<sup>2</sup> And when the ten heard *it*, they  
 42 began to be much displeased with James and John.<sup>3</sup> But  
 Jesus called them *to him*, and saith unto them, Ye know that  
 they which are accounted to rule<sup>4</sup> over the Gentiles exercise

<sup>1</sup> The cup that I drink ye shall drink

<sup>2</sup> but it is for them for whom it hath been prepared

<sup>3</sup> to be moved with indignation concerning

<sup>4</sup> which are monarchs

*drink.* Through many tribulations must we enter into the kingdom of God. Gold must be purified in the furnace, grain be dislodged from the husk in the threshing-mill, Christian character braced and strengthened by afflictions. "Let who will hope to walk upon roses and violets to the throne of heaven. O Saviour, let me trace Thee by the track of Thy blood, and by Thy red steps follow Thee to Thine eternal rest and happiness" (Hall). The disciple is not greater than his Master. "No wonder, then, should we receive on ourselves some drops of the sacred agony which bedewed His garments; no wonder should we be sprinkled with the sorrows which He bore in expiation of our sins."

40. **Not mine to give;** R. V., *Not mine to give, but it is for them for whom it hath been prepared.* "He who goes nearest in time to Christ the crucified, shall get nearest in eternity to Christ the glorified" (Morison). The rewards in the kingdom are not to be given away in the fashion in which Oriental sovereigns bestowed their favours; they are to be the recompense of faithful service, and decreed by the Father. The Father gives these heavenly honours to none but the Son; and the Son gives them to none but according to the decree of the Father.

41. **To be much displeased.** *To be moved with indignation.* Compare Matthew (xx. 24). Their indignation was prompted by the same feelings which prompted the request of the sons of Zebedee; they were all beginning to be jealous of each other.

42. **Ye know that they which are accounted to rule.** Vers. 42 and 43 are a parable taken from the gradations of an Oriental court. The meaning is more clearly seen when the translation is: "*Ye know that supreme rulers (monarchs) among the Gentiles exercise severe despotic rule without considering their subjects, and that their nobles tyrannize over their inferiors. But it is not so among you: he that will be the noble must be the attendant, and the monarch must act as the slave.*" In an ordinary Oriental court there were—(1) the monarch; (2) the great nobles; (3) the attendants, whether guards or body servants; and (4) the lowest slaves; and each rank tyrannized over the rank below it. In the kingdom of Heaven the order is reversed,—the monarch does the work of the slave, the noble the duties of the body servant. Service in the kingdom is worth more than official position. The passage also teaches the dignity of all labour. "The bearing of such passages as this on the alleviation of slavery in the ancient world should be considered. The influence of this towards the abolition of slavery in modern times might have been still greater if the translators had used *slave* rather than *servant*" (Carr).

43. **So shall it not be . . . you** (1 Pet. v. 3). One of our Lord's many

lordship over them ;<sup>1</sup> and their great ones<sup>2</sup> exercise authority  
 43 upon them. But so shall it not be among you :<sup>3</sup> but who-  
 44 soever will be great among you, shall be your minister :<sup>4</sup> and  
 whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant<sup>5</sup> of all.  
 45 For even<sup>6</sup> the Son of man came not to be ministered unto,  
 but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.  
 46 And they came to Jericho : and as he went out of Jericho<sup>7</sup>  
 with his disciples and a great number of people, blind Barti-

<sup>1</sup> lord it over them  
<sup>4</sup> attendant

<sup>2</sup> their nobles  
<sup>5</sup> slave

<sup>3</sup> But it is not so among you  
<sup>6</sup> verily <sup>7</sup> out from Jericho

rebukes of the hierarchical principle in the Church. All Christian rule should be *ministerial*. Love teaches us to serve.

45. And to give his life. "We have here one of the early intimations of the *purport* of the Passion, that the Redeemer was about to give His life as a ransom for many (1 Tim. ii. 6). . . . The three great circles of images which the Scriptures employ when they represent to us the purport of the death of Christ are—(1) a *sin-offering*, or *propitiation* (1 John ii. 2, iv. 10); (2) *reconciliation* (= *at-one-ment*) *with an offended friend* (Rom. v. 10, 11, xi. 15; 2 Cor. v. 18, 19); (3) as here, *redemption from slavery* (Rom. iii. 24; Eph. i. 7; Col. i. 14)" (Maclear).

Ransom implies both *substitution* and *equivalence*.

3. At Jericho—Blind Bartimæus, x. 46-52: Matt. xx. 29-34;  
 Luke xviii. 35-43.

46. They came to Jericho. Jericho was in our Lord's day a famous stronghold, surrounded by towers and castles, with a great palace built by Archelaus, the son of Herod, in the midst of groves of palm-trees, balsam gardens, and streams of water. It was near a very fertile plain. It stood where the common caravan roads met, and had great commerce; metals were found in its neighbourhood, and it carried on a large trade in costly balsams. For Old Testament references to Jericho, see Josh. ii.-vi.; Judg. iii. 13; 2 Sam. x. 5; 1 Kings xvi. 34; 2 Kings ii. 4, 5, xxv. 5. Our Lord reached Jericho at this time either on the evening of the Thursday or on the morning of the Friday before the Passover.

As he went out. St. Matthew says that Christ cured *two* blind men. St. Luke records the cure of *one* as our Lord *entered*, "was come nigh unto" Jericho. St. Mark records the cure of *one* as He left Jericho. A great many suggestions have been made to reconcile the passages. The simplest seems to be *either* to translate "as He was come nigh" by "when He was near Jericho," which might mean either when He was entering or when He was leaving, *or* to suppose that Bartimæus cried out when our Lord entered, and again when He left the town, and that he was healed on his second appeal. These little variations which occur in the Gospel histories prove the independence of the writers, and in no way lessen the authority of the Scripture narrative.

A great multitude. Jesus would meet at Jericho the Galilean caravans going to the feast.

Blind Bartimæus; R. V., *The son of Timæus, Bartimæus, a blind beggar*, or perhaps "*the blind beggar*." "The phrase implies that the man was

mæus, the son of Timæus, sat by the highway-side begging.<sup>1</sup>  
 47 And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began  
 to cry out, and say, Jesus, *thou* son of David, have mercy on  
 48 me. And many charged him<sup>2</sup> that he should hold his peace :  
 but he cried the more a great deal, *Thou* son of David, have  
 49 mercy on me. And Jesus stood still, and commanded him  
 to be called.<sup>3</sup> And they call the blind man, saying unto him,  
 50 Be of good comfort, rise ; he calleth thee. And he, casting  
 51 away his garment, rose,<sup>4</sup> and came to Jesus. And Jesus  
 answered and said unto him, What wilt thou that I should do  
 unto thee? The blind man said unto him, Lord,<sup>5</sup> that I  
 52 might receive my sight. And Jesus said unto him, Go thy

<sup>1</sup> the son of Timæus, Bartimæus, a blind beggar, was sitting by the wayside

<sup>2</sup> And many rebuked him

<sup>3</sup> And Jesus stood still, and said, Call ye him.

<sup>4</sup> sprang up

<sup>5</sup> Rabboni

well known to Christians as a monument of the Lord's miracle, as was probably also Simon the Leper ; and the designation ' Son of Timæus ' would distinguish him not merely from the father, but also from other sons " (Lange). He was a well-known man, so his case is specially recorded.

47. **Jesus of Nazareth.** Bartimæus called Him " Son of David," Messiah, and he hailed Him with beautiful homage, " Have mercy on me." " The Kyrie Eleison of the soul which precedes its Hosanna."

48. **Many charged him.** " When a man is in earnest about his salvation, and begins to cry that his eyes may be opened . . . he will find infinite hindrances ; and these not from professed enemies of the gospel, but from such as seem, like this multitude, to be on Jesus' side " (Trench).

50. **His garment.** The *abba* or heavy blanket that was wrapped round him over his tunic, which formed the upper robe by day and the covering by night. Hence the Mosaic law ordered that pledged garments should be returned before nightfall (Ex. xxii. 26 ; Deut. xxiv. 13). The blind man ran to Jesus, and we must hasten to Him in faith, though we see Him not.

The translation of the Authorized Version obscures the graphic narrative of Mark. We are told—(1) that Bartimæus cried out to Jesus : *ὁ υἱὸς Δαυὶδ*, ' *Ἰησοῦ ἐλέησόν με*, (2) that many rebuked him, (3) that he cried the more, (4) that Jesus stood still and, after a pause, (5) said, Call him, (6) that the people encouraged him, *θάρασι, ἔγειραι, φωνεῖ σε*, (7) that at the word *he sprang up* and (8) cast away his garment.

51. **Lord ; R. V., Rabboni.** The highest title he could give. It is used here and by Mary Magdalene to her risen Lord (John xx. 16). The gradations in title were, *Rab*, *Rabbi*, *Rabban* or *Rabbon*, and *Rabboni*.

52. **Thy faith hath saved thee ; ἡ πίστις σου σέσωκέ σε.**

"Ye that have eyes, yet cannot see  
 In darkness and in misery,  
 Recall those mighty Voices Three :  
 ' *Ἰησοῦ ἐλέησόν με*,  
*θάρασι, ἔγειρε, φωνεῖ σε*,  
 ' *Ἡ πίστις σου σέσωκέ σε*."

way ; thy faith hath made thee whole. And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way.

CHAP. XI. 1 And when they came nigh to Jerusalem, unto Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount of Olives, he sendeth

**Followed Jesus.** He joined the company going to Jerusalem, *glorifying God* (Luke xviii. 43). The procession from Jericho to Jerusalem foreshadowed the triumphal entry two days later of the great Prophet. The procession of the High Priest, slain, and risen from the dead, is the living Church who in all ages follow the Master.

Mark omits the *interview with Zacchæus*, the parable of the servants and the money left in charge to be traded with, and the arrival at Bethany six days before the Passover. The anointing at Bethany (xiv. 3-9) comes in between chaps. x. and xi. It took place at a feast in the house of Simon the leper, on the evening of the Saturday, or Jewish Sabbath, before the Passover. The Jewish Sabbath ended at sunset.

#### IV.—EVENTS OF THE PASSION WEEK.

##### I.—FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK (*Palm Sunday*), xi. 1-11.

1. *The triumphal entry*, 1-11 : Matt. xxi. 1-11 ; Luke xix. 29-40 ; John xii. 12-19.

XI. 1. **When they came.** The triumphal entry took place on the first day of the week (10th Nisan). The Jewish Sabbath was our Saturday, but their day counted from sunset to sunset ; and therefore their Sabbath began on our Friday *after sunset*, and ended on our Saturday *after sunset*. The order of events was probably as follows :—

(1) Jesus left Jericho on the morning and reached Bethany on the evening of Friday.

(2) There He remained with the Twelve, our Lord doubtless being with Lazarus and his sisters.

(3) The next day, Sabbath (our Saturday), He spent in quiet at Bethany.

(4) In the evening He was at supper in the house of Simon the leper, His disciples, Lazarus and his sisters, being present (Matt. xxvi. 6 ; John xii. 1).

(5) At this feast He was anointed by Mary (John xii. 3 ; Mark xiv. 3-9).

(6) During the afternoon, Jews of Jerusalem, who had heard from pilgrims of His arrival, went out to see Him and Lazarus (John xii. 9).

(7) This coming to the ears of the chief priests, a meeting of council was held at night to consider the propriety of putting both Jesus and Lazarus to death (John xii. 10, 11).

(8) On the morrow (John xii. 12), *i.e.* on the first day of the week, the narrative of Mark resumes.

**Bethphage**, the house of *unripe figs*, a hamlet on the spur of Olivet, distant rather more than a mile from the city, situated between two deep valleys, probably the "village over against you" (ver. 2).

**Bethany**, perhaps the house of *dates*, the village of Lazarus and Martha and Mary, was about two miles from Jerusalem, at the south-east base of the Mount of Olives.

Matthew says "to Bethphage, unto the Mount of Olives ;" Luke, "nigh to Bethphage and Bethany. at the mount called the Mount of Olives."

2 forth two of his disciples, and saith unto them, Go your way into the village over against you : and as soon as ye be entered into it, ye shall find a colt tied, whereon never man  
3 sat ; loose him, and bring *him*. And if any man say unto you, Why do ye this ? say ye that the Lord hath need of  
4 him ; and straightway he will send him hither.<sup>1</sup> And they went their way, and found the colt tied by the door without

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<sup>1</sup> and straightway he will send him back hither.

2. **A colt tied.** " In the East the ass is in high esteem. Statelier, livelier, swifter than with us, it vies with the horse in favour. Among the Jews it was equally valued as a beast of burden, for work in the field or at the mill, and for riding. In contrast to the horse, which had been introduced by Solomon from Egypt, and was used especially for war, it was the symbol of peace. To the Jew it was peculiarly national, for had not Moses led his wife, seated on an ass, to Egypt ; had not the judges ridden on white asses ? and was not the ass of Abraham, the friend of God, noted in Scripture ? Every Jew, moreover, expected, from the words of one of the prophets (Zech. ix. 9), that the Messiah would enter Jerusalem on an ass. No act could be more perfectly in keeping with the conception of a king of Israel, and no word could express more clearly that the king proclaimed Himself the Messiah" (Geikie).

Matthew says, " an ass tied, and a colt with her."

Whereon never man sat, and therefore fit for sacred use, Num. xix. 2 ; Deut. xxi. 3 ; 1 Sam. vi. 7.

3. **The Lord hath need of him.** This phrase has been variously interpreted. The word " Lord " was used as a title of courtesy given by disciples to a great Rabbi ; the phrase was specially applied to Christ by His disciples when they desired to recognize His Messiahship ; the words in their highest sense denote Jehovah. If the third meaning be accepted, then the owners were to be assured that the colt was to be used in Jehovah's service, a somewhat vague assurance. Probably the phrase, as used by the disciples, meant the Messiah ; and as heard by the owners, meant to them the great Rabbi about whom every one was talking. The presence of Jesus in the neighbourhood of the city must have been well known, and expectation was raised high. The owners of the colt, whether secret disciples or not, would recognize the claim of the Teacher.

**He will send him hither ;** R. V., *He will send him back hither*. The reading of the Revised Version implies that the disciples were to inform the owners, that as soon as Jesus had no further need of the colt it would be sent back to the owners. The reading of the Authorized Version makes the sentence a word of encouragement to the disciples, assuring them that the owners would send the colt. The revisers have followed Tischendorf and Tregelles, who are supported by all the principal MSS. save the Alexandrian.

4. **And they went their way.** Vers. 4 and 5 abound in graphic details characteristic of Mark. They describe what the two disciples did, with the minuteness of an eye-witness. Hence it has been conjectured that Peter, whose interpreter Mark was, was one of the two. They found the colt with its mother tied at the door or gate outside, not within the yard ; people were

5 in a place where two ways met;<sup>1</sup> and they loose him. And certain of them that stood there said unto them, What do  
6 ye, loosing the colt? And they said unto them even as  
7 Jesus had commanded:<sup>2</sup> and they let them go. And they brought the colt to Jesus, and cast their garments on him;  
8 and he sat upon him. And many spread their garments in the way;<sup>3</sup> and others cut down branches off the trees, and

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<sup>1</sup> at the door without in the open street

<sup>2</sup> said

<sup>3</sup> upon the way

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standing about, and some of them (the owners, Luke says) remonstrated; the disciples gave the message of Jesus, and were allowed to take the colt away with them.

**Where two ways met;** R. V., *in the open street*. The word means—(1) any roundabout road, (2) a pathway round a house, (3) a block of houses surrounded by a street, (4) the quarter of a town. It means here, in the street which went round the house. Our Lord had gone out from Bethany on foot with His disciples. He came to the turn of the road where Bethphage was seen over against them. At this point He stopped, and sent two of His disciples to find and bring Him a colt which had never been ridden, and which they would find with its mother (Matt. xxi. 2), not in the courtyard, but outside at the door, in a back lane going round the house.

**5. Certain of them that stood there.** Luke says *the owners*—"And as they were loosing the colt, the owners thereof said unto them" (xix. 33).

**7. Their garments,** that is, their *abbas*, or outer robes of heavy plaid or blanket. The disciples prepared housings for the colt to do Jesus royal honours, as the companions of Jehu extemporized a throne (2 Kings ix. 13).

**He sat upon it.** Luke says that the disciples set Jesus on the colt, and they probably also led it by the bridle; both circumstances pointing to royal honours given to Jesus. "Never did our Saviour take so much state upon Him as now that He was going towards His Passion; other journeys He measured on foot, without noise or train: this with a princely equipage, and loud acclamation" (Hall). And yet with it all there was humility. He who might have summoned a legion of angels, rode on a borrowed ass, with the coarse home-spun plaids of His disciples for princely housings.

**8. And many spread their garments in the way.** They spread their *abbas* on the road, that the colt bearing Jesus might walk upon them. The Evangelist now turns to describe the behaviour of the crowds that thronged to do honour to the Messiah entering His capital city. "The entry into Jerusalem must not be regarded as an isolated fact. It was a culminating outburst of feeling. It is clear that the expectation of the kingdom was raised to its highest pitch. The prostration of Salome at the feet of the prince, the request of her sons, the dispute among the ten, the gathering crowds, the cry of Bartimæus, the triumphal entry,—all are signs of that feeling" (Carr). The disciples alone had heard the predictions of the Passion, which they had not understood, and which were now forgotten in the outburst of popular enthusiasm.

**Branches off the trees;** R. V., *branches (or layers of leaves) which they had cut from the fields*. The word *branches* in Mark is not the word in Matthew. The word in the text means—(1) a bed of straw or leaves; (2) a mat or

9 strawed *them* in the way.<sup>1</sup> And they that went before, and they that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna ; Blessed *is* he that  
10 cometh in the name of the Lord : Blessed *be* the kingdom of

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<sup>1</sup> and others branches which they had cut from the fields

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matting. The meaning probably is, that the people brought from the fields or gardens the enormous palm leaves (12 to 16 feet long), which they strewed in layers, perhaps twisting the stems.

9. **They that went before.** "Two vast streams of people met on that day. The one poured out from the city (John xii. 12, 13), and as they came through the gardens where clusters of palm rose on the south-eastern corner of Olivet, they cut down the long branches, as was their wont at the feast of Tabernacles, and moved upward toward Bethany with loud shouts of welcome. From Bethany streamed forth the crowds who had assembled there the previous night. . . . The two streams met midway. Half of the vast mass, turning round, preceded, the other half followed. Gradually the long procession swept up over the ridge where first begins 'the descent of the Mount of Olives' toward Jerusalem. At this point the first view is caught of the south-eastern corner of the city. The temple and the more northern portions are hid by the slope of Olivet on the right ; what is seen is only Mount Sion. . . . It was at this precise point, 'as He drew near, at the descent of the Mount of Olives' (may it not have been from the sight thus opening upon them?), that the shout of triumph burst forth from the multitude, *Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord!* Again the procession advanced. The road descends a slight declivity, and the glimpse of the city is again withdrawn behind the intervening ridge of Olivet. A few moments and the path mounts again. It climbs a rugged ascent ; it reaches a ledge of smooth rock, and in an instant the whole city bursts into view. It is hardly possible to doubt that this rise and turn of the road, this rocky ledge, was the exact point where the multitude paused again ; and 'He, when He beheld the city,' wept over it" (Stanley, *Sinai and Palestine*).

**Hosanna** is the Hebrew of the words, "Save now, I beseech Thee." *Hoshiah-na*, the first word of Ps. cxviii. 25 : "Save now, I beseech thee, O Lord : O Lord, I beseech thee, send now prosperity." This verse was always sung during the procession round the altar at the most important feasts. The word had grown to be a mere acclaim or shout, but on this occasion the people went back to the words of the Psalm from which it was first taken. *Salvation* is the root-idea in Hosanna, and how ignorant of the true meaning of salvation was the shouting crowd !

**Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord**, from Ps. cxviii. 26. *He that cometh* was one of the recognized titles of the Messiah, and this shout implied that the people hailed Jesus as the Christ.

10. **Blessed be the kingdom of our father David.** *Blessed be the kingdom that cometh, the kingdom of our father David.* Mark alone records the shout of welcome for the kingdom as well as for the king.

**Hosanna in the highest.** *Hosanna in the heavens*, which are appealed to, to join in the acclaim, and re-echo the praises on earth.

The full significance of the shouts of the people can only be seen when the various exclamations recorded by all the four Evangelists are gathered together :—





our father David, that cometh in the name of the Lord ;<sup>1</sup>  
Hosanna in the highest.

<sup>1</sup> Blessed is the kingdom that cometh, *the kingdom* of our father David

MATTHEW.	MARK.	LUKE.	JOHN.
Hosanna to the Son of David.	Hosanna.		Hosanna.
Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.	Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.	Blessed is the king that cometh in the name of the Lord.	Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord ; even the king of Israel.
	Blessed is the king- dom that cometh, the kingdom of our father David.		
Hosanna in the highest.	Hosanna in the highest.	Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest.	

The acclamations are taken from Ps. cxviii. 25, 26, which was part of the Great Hallel (Ps. cxiii.-cxviii.). These verses, it is said, were sung at the feast of Tabernacles, and therefore were naturally suggested by the palm branches torn down to strew in the way. They were sung by the inhabitants of Jerusalem to welcome the pilgrims coming up to the feast. Notice—

(1) That the shouts used to welcome pilgrims are directly applied to recognize Jesus as the Messiah by the addition of the words *to the Son of David* recorded by Matthew.

(2) This recognition is made more emphatic by being followed by the verse, *Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord*, for He-that-cometh, or *Habba*, was one of the names given by the scribes to the Christ.

(3) The coming of Jesus is hailed as the entrance of a king in the shouts recorded by Luke, *Blessed is the king that cometh*, and by John, *Blessed is he that cometh . . . even the king of Israel*.

(4) The entrance of Jesus is hailed as the beginning of the Messianic kingdom, the restoration of the kingdom of David in the exclamation recorded by Mark only.

(5) The shouting multitude claim that heaven is in accord with them in their recognition of Jesus as the Christ when they cry *Hosanna in the highest*.

(6) And this idea is poetically expressed in the sentence recorded by Luke, *Peace in heaven and glory in the highest*, where the multitude unconsciously re-echoes the angel's hymn on the nativity, *Peace on earth and glory in the highest* (Luke ii. 14).

Ewald weaves the shouts together into what he calls an impromptu Messianic hymn, and which he thinks was for a long period sung in the earliest Christian Church :—

“ Give victory to the Son of David !  
Blessed is He coming in the name of the Lord !  
Blessed the coming kingdom of our father David !  
Give victory in the heavenly heights ! ”

As the people shout, Jesus' thoughts were far away. His gaze was fixed on Jerusalem, and the thoughts that crowded caused His heart to swell with grief. Tears streamed down His cheeks, and the disciples who walked beside

- 11 And Jesus entered into Jerusalem, and into the temple;<sup>1</sup> and when he had looked round about upon all things, and now the eventide was come,<sup>2</sup> he went out unto Bethany with the twelve.
- 12 And on the morrow, when they were come from Bethany,
- 13 he was hungry: and seeing a fig tree afar off having leaves, he came, if haply he might find any thing thereon: and when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves; for the time of
- 14 figs was not yet.<sup>3</sup> And Jesus answered and said unto it, No

<sup>1</sup> And he entered into Jerusalem into the temple<sup>2</sup> it being now eventide<sup>3</sup> for it was not the season of figs

Him alone heard Him in the midst of this sea of acclamations lamenting over the fate soon to befall Jerusalem. The Saviour sympathetically suffering in the midst of His triumphal entry!

Mark omits the interference of the Pharisees, who ask Jesus to rebuke the jubilant people, and the description of Jesus' lament over Jerusalem; with the other Synoptists he omits to say what John tells us, that much of the popular enthusiasm had been excited by the raising of Lazarus (John xii. 18, 19).

11. Entered into Jerusalem and into the temple. Omit *and*; the entrance into the temple was the continuation of the entrance into Jerusalem. Our Lord went right on through the streets to the temple, to His Father's house.

He looked round about on all things. A solemn searching look, taking in the whole scene of profanation, and yet He did nothing that day. We may be confident that God sees all the wickedness that is in the world, and all the evil that is in our own hearts, which ought to be the temples of the Holy Ghost, though He do not presently reckon for it nor cast it out.

## 2. Back to Bethany, xi. 11.

The eventide; R. V., *It being now eventide*. Mark alone records that Jesus returned to Bethany, and informs us therefore that the second cleansing of the temple was on the day after the triumphal entry.

## II.—MONDAY, xi. 12-19.

### 1. The fruitless fig-tree, 12-14: Matt. xxi. 18, 19.

12. He was hungry. It was not the first time that Jesus felt the pangs of hunger (Matt. iv. 2); but the wonder is that He could be hungry coming from Bethany, where the hospitable Martha, Mary, and Lazarus were ready to entertain Him. His work had before left Him no leisure so much as to eat (Mark vi. 31), and He had probably spent the greater part of the night in communion with the Father, brooding over Jerusalem, the shouting crowd of Jews, His vocation to hang on the cross, which in the end was to draw all men unto Him. During the triumphal entry Jesus wept; on the morning following He hungered; for He came to bear all those infirmities which are the common lot of mankind.

13. The time of figs was not yet. The ordinary fig season was later in the year. Fig-trees in Palestine sometimes have the fruit formed as early as

man eat fruit of thee hereafter for ever. And his disciples heard *it*.

- 15 And they come to Jerusalem: and Jesus went into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money-changers, 16 and the seats of them that sold doves; and would not suffer that any man should carry *any* vessel through the temple. 17 And he taught, saying unto them, Is it not written, My house

February and ripe in April, *i.e.* at the season in which our Lord came to the tree; and there is one species which bears fruit and leaves in early spring, the fruit appearing before the leaves. The fig-tree does not usually send forth leaves till the fruit is ripe. This tree, therefore, which was seen *afar off* among the leafless fig-trees, and seemed, according to the nature of the tree, to be an early fruit-bearer, was the type of a fair profession without performance, and an emblem of the Jewish people. The withering of this fruitless fig-tree is Christ's only miracle of judgment, and it was done, in mercy to man, on an inanimate object, to teach a moral lesson.

2. *The temple cleansed a second time*, xi. 15-18: Matt. xxi. 12-16; Luke xix. 45-48.

15. **Jesus went into the temple.** For the first cleansing, see John ii. 13-17. Pilgrims came to Jerusalem from all parts of the world to keep the Passover, and at Passover times the city was crowded to excess. From a census taken in the time of Nero, it was calculated that more than 2,700,000 people gathered to the Passover feast. The money spent in the city during these feast occasions formed a great part of the means of livelihood of the native Jews. To destroy the temple and the feasts was to take from them their living. Hence the fatal force of the accusation made by the Pharisees, that Jesus meant to pull down the temple and abolish its services. The mob of citizens were persuaded that Jesus meant to take the bread out of their mouths, and their *Hosannas* were changed to cries of *Crucify Him*. For the convenience of visitors one of the courts of the temple was set apart for a market, where they could buy what animals they needed for sacrifice. Thus God's house became a place of trade.

**Money-changers.** The pilgrims brought with them the coinage of their countries,—Egyptian, Syrian, Persian, Greek, and Roman,—in almost all cases stamped with idolatrous emblems, and therefore inadmissible for temple dues. Money-changers were present, who changed the foreign coinage for Jewish money.

**Sold doves,** for the purification of poor women (Lev. xii. 6-8).

16. **Should carry any vessel, or a vessel.** The court of the Gentiles was so large, that unless ordinary passers were allowed to make use of it as a thoroughfare, they had to make a great circuit. Jesus' prohibition of this common traffic is recorded by Mark alone.

17. **Is it not written.** Our Lord combined two Old Testament quotations (Isa. lvi. 7 and Jer. vii. 11). *My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations* (the correct rendering) is a quotation from Isa. lvi. 7: "Mine house shall be called a house of prayer for all people."

shall be called of all nations the house of prayer?<sup>1</sup> but ye  
 18 have made it a den of thieves.<sup>2</sup> And the scribes and chief  
 priests heard *it*, and sought how they might destroy him: for  
 they feared him, because all the people was astonished at his  
 doctrine.

19 And when even was come,<sup>3</sup> he went out of the city.

20 And in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig-

<sup>1</sup> be called a house of prayer for all nations

<sup>2</sup> robbers

<sup>3</sup> And every evening, *or* whenever evening was come

Ye have made it a den of thieves; R. V., *of robbers or bandits*. The reference is to Jer. vii. 11: "Is this house, which is called by my name, become a den of robbers in your eyes?" where the prophet is denouncing the hypocrisy of the leaders of the Jewish people in his days in terms not unlike those which our Lord on more than one occasion used of the Pharisees. One of the verses of the context, as more than one commentator has remarked, is very suggestive: "For if ye thoroughly amend your ways and your doings: if ye thoroughly execute judgment between a man and his neighbour; if ye oppress not the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, *and shed not innocent blood* in this place . . . then will I cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers for ever and ever" (Jer. vii. 5-7).

The translation *thieves* misses the picturesqueness of the original, which is *robber* or *bandit*. The temple had become like one of those caves inhabited by a band of outlawed brigands so common in the limestone caverns of Judea, or near the waters of Merom. The stir, wrangling, fierce words of dispute, made the temple-court resemble one of those caves where brigands quarrelled over the spoils. "They who suffer vain worldly thoughts to lodge within them when they are at their devotions, turn the house of prayer into a house of merchandise" (Matt. Henry).

18. Chief priests included—(1) the high priest; (2) those who had been high priests; (3) the chiefs of twenty-four courses (1 Chron. xxiv.).

They feared him. The fear of the highest ecclesiastical authorities is recorded by Mark alone.

### 3. Back to Bethany, 19.

19. When even was come; rather, *whenever even was come, or every evening*. The gates were shut at sunset, and before that, when it became late, Jesus left Jerusalem every evening for Bethany or its neighbourhood. Mark alone records this.

Mark omits between verses 18 and 19—(1) the healing of the lame and the blind in the temple, and (2) the hosannas of the children (Matt. xxi. 14-17).

## III.—TUESDAY, XI. 20-xiii. 27.

I. The lesson of the withered fig-tree, xi. 20-26: Matt. xxi. 20-22.

20. In the morning, as they passed by, going into the city to the temple, for as Luke (xix. 47) tells us, He taught daily in the temple. Mark's narrative is much more precise than that of Matthew. He tells us—

(1) That the disciples did not see that the fig-tree was withered away until the following morning;

21 tree dried up<sup>1</sup> from the roots. And Peter, calling to remembrance, saith unto him, Master, behold, the fig-tree which  
 22 thou cursedst is withered away. And Jesus answering, saith  
 23 unto them, Have faith in God. For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea;<sup>2</sup> and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith.<sup>3</sup>  
 24 Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive *them*, and ye shall have  
 25 *them*.<sup>4</sup> And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought

<sup>1</sup> withered away<sup>2</sup> Be thou taken up and cast into the sea<sup>3</sup> ye shall have it<sup>4</sup> that ye have received them, and ye shall have them

(2) That Peter remembered the words of Jesus on the previous evening, and—

(3) Becoming the spokesman of the Twelve, pointed out the tree to Jesus. On the other hand, Matthew (xxi. 20) tells us that the disciples *marvelled*, which explains the words of Jesus.

22. **And Jesus answering.** Answering not so much the words of Peter as the wonder which he and the disciples expressed. They were moved not by the spiritual meaning lying beneath the act, but by the manifestation of power over nature which it showed. They were like modern thinkers who discuss the miracles merely as manifestations of creative power, possible or impossible to their minds, and forget that they were also manifestations of grace, *signs* as well as *acts of power* or *things to be wondered at*. In His answer Jesus began with their state of wonderment, and led them back to dwell on the store of grace promised to the faithful.

**Have faith in God**, *i.e.* faith in the boundless resources of God, who is the personal source of miraculous power, and is in covenant with His people (Matt. xvii. 20; Luke xvii. 6).

23. **This mountain.** Pointing to the Mount of Olives, on which they were standing, as He had on another occasion pointed to Hermon (Matt. xvii. 20). "By the mountain He understands whatsoever things are arduous" (Zwingle). No physical barrier can resist the power of a divinely-grounded and inspired faith. Mountains of sin, of temptation, of distrust, of distress, and of misfortune, have been removed by faith.

**Shall not doubt.** All desires which are the object of faith must be fulfilled, for they are rooted in the omnipotence of God. The word is the same as in Rom. iv. 20, 21, "But waxed strong through faith, giving glory to God, and being freely assured that what He had promised, He was able also to perform," where Abraham's faith is extolled; and in Jas. i. 6, "But let him ask in faith, nothing doubting."

24. **Ye shall have them.** If you do not find your believing prayer granted, ask yourself what lies within that hinders your being heard. Good words, oral prayers, external exercises without the Spirit, good wishes and resolutions, are mere leaves without fruit.

25. **When ye stand.** The Jews had three postures in prayer—(1) *standing*, which seems to have been the most frequent (as Hannah, 1 Sam. i. 26; Pharisees at the corners of streets, Matt. vi. 5; the Pharisee and publican

against any : that your Father also which is in heaven may  
 26 forgive you your trespasses. But if ye do not forgive, neither  
 will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.<sup>1</sup>  
 27 And they come again to Jerusalem : and as he was walking  
 in the temple, there come to him the chief priests, and the

<sup>1</sup> omit verse 26

in the temple, Luke xviii. 11-13); (2) *kneeling*, when the posture was meant to express more than usual solemnity and abasement (as Solomon at the dedication of the temple, 1 Kings viii. 54; Ezra, Ezra ix. 5; Daniel, Dan. vi. 10); (3) *prostration*, which was the most solemn posture (as Elijah on Mount Carmel, 1 Kings xviii. 42; the people after the reading of the law, Neh. viii. 6). Our Lord prayed at least in four postures—(1) *standing*, when He prayed the prayer recorded in John xvii.; (2) *kneeling* at His first praying in the Garden of Gethsemane (Luke xxii. 41); (3) *prostration* in the garden of Gethsemane (Mark xiv. 35); (4) *reclining*, when He gave thanks at table. Whence we may conclude that no posture is prescribed if only there be reverence manifested. In the Apostolic Church the common posture recorded is kneeling (as Stephen, Acts vii. 60; Peter, ix. 40; Paul, xx. 36, xxi. 5). Among the Jews the hands were “lifted up” or “spread out,” with the palms uppermost.

**Forgive.** Faith can never be separated from the forgiving spirit. “The necessary qualification of believing prayer is that we freely forgive those who have been any way injurious to us, and be in charity with all men.”

2. *The attack of the Sanhedrin, their questions and Jesus' counter question,*  
 xi. 27-33 : Matt. xxi. 23-27; Luke xx. 1-8.

27. **And they come again to Jerusalem.** On the Tuesday of the Passion week. Mark alone mentions that Jesus was *walking* in the temple. Luke says that He was preaching the gospel (xx. 1).

**The chief priests and the scribes and the elders.** The three classes of rulers who composed the *Sanhedrin* or high court at Jerusalem. The *Sanhedrin* in our Lord's days was an ecclesiastical court which had been instituted in imitation of the council of elders who ruled the country under the Maccabees. It was composed of the chief priests (see p. 188), the elders of the people, and the most celebrated of the Rabbis or scribes, and consisted of seventy-one members, at whose head was the chief of the *Sanhedrin* and a president. The sittings were held daily in a building near the eastern gate of the temple. It was the lawful court for deciding all questions of public worship, for the authoritative interpretation of disputed passages in Scripture, for appointing the festivals, and so on. The whole life of the Jews was so governed by theocratic ideas, that the *Sanhedrin* really became the supreme civil court. It decided all difficult points of law about betrothals, marriage, divorce, inheritance, contracts, and deeds of gift. Jesus was summoned before it on a charge of assuming the Messiahship, Peter and John for promulgating heresy, Stephen on a charge of blasphemy, and Paul for violating a temple bye-law. The *Sanhedrin* was, within certain limits, a court of appeal from the local *Sanhedrin* or councils which met in the country synagogues and decided the civil and criminal cases of the district. The usual punishments were fines and scourging; but the *Sanhedrin* claimed the

28 scribes, and the elders, and say unto him, By what authority  
doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority to  
29 do these things? And Jesus answered and said unto them, I  
will also ask of you one question, and answer me, and I will  
30 tell you by what authority I do these things. The baptism  
31 of John, was *it* from heaven, or of men?<sup>1</sup> answer me. And  
they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From

<sup>1</sup> from men

right of inflicting capital punishment. The Romans, who were usually content to allow subject nations to govern according to their own laws and customs, allowed the Sanhedrin great powers, and insisted only on the right of revising all capital sentences.

The elders were the representatives of the people, and had existed in Israel from the earliest times.

(1) Moses found them already existing when he availed himself of their services in his government (compare Ex. xviii. 13-26 with xix. 7).

(2) When the tribes became settled in a nation, the elders still ruled as *representatives of the nation* (elders of Israel, 1 Kings viii. 1-3); as *district governors over the tribes* (2 Sam. xix. 11), or as local magistrates in towns (1 Kings xxi. 8).

(3) They retained their position during the captivity (Jer. xxix. 1; Ezek. viii. 1, xx. 1).

(4) Subsequently to the return (Ezra v. 5, vi. 7-14).

(5) Under the Maccabees (1 Macc. vii. 33); and

(6) In the time of Christ, where they are a distinct body from the Sanhedrin, but have representatives in it.

28. By what authority. The Sanhedrin were entitled by law to question the claims of new teachers, and they did so usually by asking for—(1) the certificate of a distinguished Rabbi who had taught the new teacher, or (2) for some miraculous sign.

They asked two questions: the one asked the kind of authority which Jesus claimed for His work; the other demanded the agency through whom the authority had been bestowed. The second question gave point to the first; the Sanhedrin were able to allege that they, the usual agency, had not given any authority to the Teacher of Nazareth. He was an unlicensed Teacher; for every Rabbi had his certificate, and every priest his ordination.

29. I will also ask of you one question. The questions of the deputation had been an attack; Jesus meets it with a question. Had they interrogated the Baptist? Did they think him a prophet?

30. The baptism of John. Mark as usual gives the scene most graphically. Jesus had been walking up and down, the deputation comes with its catching question, put with ceremonious politeness. Jesus stands confronting them with His counter question about the baptism of John, and then as the members of the Sanhedrin hesitated, came the sharp *Answer me*. Was the baptism of John a divine or only a human institution? Was John a prophet of Jehovah or an unlicensed teacher? If John was a prophet, he had testified of Jesus, and the word of a prophet of Jehovah was even legally higher than that of the Sanhedrin.

32 heaven ; he will say, Why then did ye not believe him? But if we shall say, Of men ;<sup>1</sup> they feared the people : for all *men*  
 33 counted John, that he was a prophet indeed.<sup>2</sup> And they answered and said unto Jesus, We cannot tell. And Jesus answering, saith unto them, Neither do I tell you by what authority I do these things.

CHAP. XII. 1 And he began to speak unto them by parables.

A *certain* man planted a vineyard, and set an hedge about it, and digged a *place* for the wine-fat,<sup>3</sup> and built a tower, and let  
 2 it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country. And at

<sup>1</sup> from men

<sup>2</sup> for all held John to be a prophet indeed

<sup>3</sup> and digged a pit for the wine-press

31. Why did ye not believe him? When he preached the near approach of the Messianic kingdom, and testified of Jesus? They had first come to his baptism (Matt. iii. 7), and then had called him a devil (Matt. xi. 18).

32. For all men counted John, that he was a prophet indeed ; rather, *For all held John to be a prophet indeed.* The word "indeed" is peculiar to Mark. The expression is rugged, but brings out in Mark's graphic way that there was no manner of doubt what the people thought about John.

33. We cannot tell. The one thing which never occurred to these ecclesiastical leaders was to speak out what they thought ; they wished to say what would pay best in the circumstances, and said what, as commonly happens, made them ridiculous. They must have felt so when they heard the parable which Jesus spoke to the people immediately afterwards.

3. *The parable of the wicked husbandmen*, xii. 1-12 : Matt. xxi. 33-45 ; Luke xx. 9-19.

1. In parables. Mark relates one only ; Matthew gives three : *the two sons* (Matt. xxi. 28-32), this one, and the *marriage supper* (xxii. 1-14). *Parables*, see note on iv. 2.

A hedge about it. Probably a stone wall built without lime, for that was the commonest fence in Palestine ; the same word as in Eph. ii. 14, "the middle *wall of partition* ;" comp. Ps. lxxx. 12, 13.

Place for the wine-fat. Fat is the old word for vat, a vessel or trough ; and wine-fat is the trough in which the grapes were trodden until all the juice was squeezed out. Jewish wine-presses or wine-fats were usually made of two troughs (Joel iii. 13), the one larger and higher than the other. The grapes were placed in the upper one, and the juice escaped by a hole or grating into the lower, from which it was taken to be stored for wine. In Palestine the troughs were often cut or digged, out of the solid rock.

Tower. Every vineyard in Palestine has a tower or stone building about twenty feet high, with a flat roof, on which sits a watcher to guard the fruit. During the vintage seasons these towers or lodges are filled with the people employed in gathering the grapes. "The tower of the watchman" is called a *cottage* in Isa. i. 8, xxiv. 20. These details are given to show that the master was in earnest to get fruit.

Let it out. A band of working vine-dressers rented the vineyard, and the



the season he sent to the husbandmen a servant,<sup>1</sup> that he might receive from the husbandmen of the fruit of the vineyard. And they caught *him*,<sup>2</sup> and beat him, and sent *him* away empty. And again he sent unto them another servant;<sup>1</sup> and at him they cast stones, and wounded *him* in the head, and sent *him* away shamefully handled. And again he sent another; and him they killed, and many others; beating some, and killing some. Having yet therefore one son, his well-beloved, he sent him also last unto them, saying,<sup>3</sup> They will reverence my son. But those husbandmen said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours. And they took him, and killed *him*, and cast *him* out of the vineyard. What shall therefore the lord of the vineyard do? he will come and destroy the

<sup>1</sup> a slave or bond-servant<sup>2</sup> took him or seized him<sup>3</sup> He had yet one, a beloved son: he sent him last unto them, saying

rent was to be paid not in money, but, as was the fashion then, in part of the fruit or wine produced (ver. 2).

3. **And they caught him, and beat him.** Mark gives the most precise account of the treatment the servants received. "Took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another" (Matt.). "Beat him, and sent him away empty . . . entreated shamefully . . . wounded him, and cast him forth" (Luke). In Mark it is—(1) beating and sending away empty; (2) stoning, wounding in the head, and shamefully handling; (3) killing; (4) beating some and killing some. In all the Evangelists there is a gradation in the insolence of the husbandmen.

5. **Beating some, and killing some.** Compare Matt. xxiii. 34–36. Most commentators have been disposed to doubt the historical possibility of the narrative, and to say that "throughout the natural probabilities of the story are sacrificed to the requirements of its moral interpretation" (Bruce); it is more than possible, however, that the disorders of the times which followed the death of Herod the Great furnished many such scenes in real life.

6. **Having yet therefore one son, his well-beloved, He had yet one, a beloved son.**

**Reverence.** *They will feel ashamed, and reverence,* is the fuller translation of the word.

7. **Come, let us kill him.** See the dramatic intensity of the scene; Jesus speaking to the people a story natural enough, vividly realistic, and made more than usually exciting by the evident meaning in it; the deputation from the Sanhedrin in the background, seeing and hearing it all, and knowing of the thrice-planned plot to kill Jesus, and of the advice of Caiaphas but yesterday spoken, that one man should be slain for the whole people.

8. **Cast him forth** (Matt. xxi. 39; Luke xx. 15). The idea seems to be a struggle in which the son is dragged out of the vineyard and there slain.

9. **He will come and destroy the husbandmen.** Matthew says that this was an exclamation from the people who were listening; their indignation had been excited by the vivid, graphic story, and they could not restrain

- 10 husbandmen, and will give the vineyard unto others. And have ye not read this scripture ;  
 The stone which the builders rejected  
 Is become the head of the corner :  
 11 This was the Lord's doing,<sup>1</sup>  
 And it is marvellous in our eyes?  
 12 And they sought to lay hold on him, but feared the people :  
 for they knew that he had spoken the parable against them :  
 and they left him, and went their way.

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<sup>1</sup> The same was made the head of the corner :  
 This was from the Lord.

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themselves. The chief priests, scribes, and elders in the background hearing it all.

10. Have ye not read this Scripture? Ps. cxviii. 22, 23, which was continually applied by the Jews to the Messiah, and is so in the New Testament (Acts iv. 11; 1 Pet. ii. 7). The verses occur in the Psalm in close proximity to the Hosanna which was shouted at the triumphal entry.

The stone which the builders rejected. These verses about the *rejected stone* may be looked upon as another parable—a parable within a parable. “The men who have just been compared to vine-dressers now become builders, and the heir cast out of the vineyard and murdered is now a stone thrown aside as useless. But the new figure enables Jesus to give a glimpse of what is to happen to Himself after evil men have wrought their worst . . . He will be raised to a place of power, an object of admiration to friends, a source of dismay to foes” (Bruce).

12. He spake the parable against them. This parable has been commonly interpreted in the following way:—The vineyard is the kingdom of God, first given in charge to the Jews, and then, after their rejection of Christ, to the Gentiles. God prepared and planted this vineyard. He fenced the Jewish people off from their neighbours—(1) by placing them in such a secluded defensible land, and (2) by surrounding them with the ceremonial law, “the middle wall of partition,” and separating them from all idolatrous nations. God looked for fruit, but got none; the people were unfaithful to their covenant. He sent servants, prophets, and they were shamefully entreated. Micaiah was scourged and thrown into a dungeon (1 Kings xxii. 24–27); so was Jeremiah (Jer. xxxvii. 15); Zechariah was stoned (2 Chron. xxiv. 21); Jezebel “slew the prophets of the Lord” (1 Kings xviii. 13); and Nehemiah tells how God’s messengers were slain (ix. 26; also Acts vii. 52; Heb. xi. 36–38). At length God had sent His own Son, the Heir of all things; and Jesus, fastening His eyes upon His audience, tells how He Himself will be treated; how, after His death, the spiritual glory of Israel will be transferred to His followers, and how the decision of God in the final judgment will depend on the way in which men receive Himself and His mission witnessed for by the apostles whom He has set apart to declare it. The speech of Stephen before the Sanhedrin (Acts vii.) is almost a sermon on this parable.

13 And they send unto him certain of the Pharisees and of  
 14 the Herodians, to catch him in *his* words.<sup>1</sup> And when they  
 were come, they say unto him, Master, we know that thou  
 art true, and carest for no man; for thou regardest not the  
 person of men, but teachest the way of God in truth:<sup>2</sup> Is it  
 15 lawful to give tribute to Cæsar, or not? Shall we give, or  
 shall we not give? But he, knowing their hypocrisy, said  
 unto them, Why tempt ye me? bring me a penny, that I  
 16 may see *it*. And they brought *it*. And he saith unto them,  
 Whose *is* this image and superscription? And they said unto  
 17 him, Cæsar's. And Jesus answering said unto them, Render

<sup>1</sup> in talk<sup>2</sup> but of a truth teachest the way of God

4. *Catching questions*, xii. 13-34.

(1) *The Pharisees—The lawfulness of paying tribute*, 13-17:

Matt. xxii. 16-22; Luke xx. 20-26.

13. **Pharisees and Herodians.** The ecclesiastics and the unpatriotic politicians of Palestine combine now as before (iii. 6) how they may catch or ensnare Him, either to accuse Him to merciless Rome or to discredit Him with the people.

**To catch him in his words**, or *in talk*. Luke, more explicit in his statement than Mark or Matthew, says that the tempters feigned themselves to be just or righteous men, scrupulous Jews who had come naturally to a great Rabbi to get Him to solve their casuistic but real scruples, and adds that they did so with the intention of delivering Jesus over to the power and authority of the governor, that is, to Pilate. This was therefore a new kind of attack. The earlier ones had been for the purpose of discrediting Jesus as a religious Teacher, this aims at entrapping Him in such fashion that Rome must interfere. No wonder the Herodians were included this time.

14. **Person of men.** *Person* meant—(1) *a mask through which an actor spoke or made sounds*; (2) *an assumed character*; (3) *here the outward appearance*. The whole address was intended to entrap Jesus into a defiance of Rome.

**Lawful to give tribute.** The great rebellion against Rome, headed by Judas of Galilee (Acts v. 37), had for its war-cry, *It is not lawful to pay tribute to Cæsar*. Jewish patriots denounced the payment of tribute—(1) because the Roman money stamped with the image of the emperor was idolatrous, (2) because no Gentile had a right to impose a yoke on the people of God. If Christ said *Yes*, His accusers would denounce Him to the people as an oppressor; if *No*, they could accuse Him to the Romans as a rebel.

15. **A penny.** The denarius, a small silver coin, whose modern value we may estimate from the fact that it was the wage of a labourer's day's work.

16. **Cæsar's.** All Roman emperors were called *Cæsar*. The reigning emperor was *Tiberius*. The Romans had permitted a special coinage for Judea, for the stricter Jews regarded the image of the emperor as idolatrous, and the Pharisees would not be likely to carry with them the little silver coin they brought to Christ, but they could easily get one by going to the money-

to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's. And they marvelled at him.<sup>1</sup>

18 Then come unto him the Sadducees, which say there is  
19 no resurrection; and they asked him, saying, Master, Moses wrote unto us, If a man's brother die, and leave *his* wife *behind him*, and leave no children, that his brother should  
20 take his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother. Now there were seven brethren: and the first took a wife, and dying left  
21 no seed. And the second took her, and died, neither left he  
22 any seed: and the third likewise. And the seven had her,  
23 and left no seed:<sup>2</sup> last of all the woman died also. In the resurrection therefore, when they shall rise, whose wife shall  
24 she be of them? for the seven had her to wife.<sup>3</sup> And Jesus answering, said unto them, Do ye not therefore err,<sup>4</sup> because

<sup>1</sup> greatly at him

<sup>2</sup> And the seven left no seed

<sup>3</sup> In the resurrection whose wife shall she be of them

<sup>4</sup> Is it not for this cause that ye err

changer's table. Christ's answer was peculiarly complete. The Pharisees had a maxim, *He whose coin is current is king of the land*. They had accepted Cæsar's coinage, and in paying tribute gave him back his own. They said, *Is it lawful to give?* Jesus answered, *Give back*. Comp. p. 52.

17. **The things that are God's.** "Give back to God that which has the image and superscription of God, the soul" (Erasmus) (Gen. i. 27, ix. 6; 1 Cor. xi. 7; Col. iii. 10). All men owe something to society and to what represents social order; but there is a wider life in which they also live which extends beyond time. They owe duties to it also, and to God their Maker and Redeemer.

(2) *The Sadducees—Is there a resurrection?* xii. 18-27:

Matt. xxii. 23-33; Luke xx. 27-38.

18. **The Sadducees** were the small but powerful party of the priestly aristocracy who were supported by the temple dues, and had come to regard religion as a matter of profitable living rather than as a heartfelt faith. Their creed consisted mainly in denials, and amongst other things they denied "the immortality of the soul, and the rewards and punishments of another life" (Josephus). See Introduction, pp. 54-56.

19. **Moses wrote.** The Sadducees rejected the *traditions of the elders*, and refused to accept anything which was not found literally in the Pentateuch. The law they quote is to be found in Deut. xxv. 5-10; Ruth iii. 13. The *first* child by the second marriage was looked on as belonging to the late husband, "*that his name be not put out of Israel.*" The law was commonly called *levirate law*, from *levir*, a brother-in-law. The law on this subject is not peculiar to the Jews, but is found amongst various Oriental nations, ancient and modern. The question put was a common subject for discussion among Jewish casuists, and the common answer was that the woman would be the wife of the first husband. Our Lord brushes aside all such casuistry, and goes down into the principles of the new life.

25 ye know not the scriptures, neither the power of God? For when they shall rise from the dead, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage; but are as the angels which are in  
 26 heaven.<sup>1</sup> And as touching the dead, that they rise: have ye not read in the book of Moses, how in the bush God spake<sup>2</sup> unto him, saying, I *am* the God of Abraham, and the God of  
 27 Isaac, and the God of Jacob? He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living: ye therefore do greatly err.

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<sup>1</sup> but are as angels in heaven

<sup>2</sup> in the place concerning the Bush, or in the section entitled the Bush

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24. **Ye know not the Scriptures, neither the power of God.** The twofold ignorance which is the mother of all errors. The *fact* of the resurrection of the dead comes from the power of God, *belief* in the fact from knowledge of the Scriptures. Jesus takes the ignorance of God's power first, and then proceeds to the Sadducees' ignorance of Scripture.

"The power of God, seen in the return of the spring (Ps. civ. 30), in the reviving of the corn (John xii. 24) . . . are all earnestness of our resurrection by the same power (Phil. iii. 21), *according to the mighty working whereby He is able to subdue all things to Himself*" (Matt. Henry).

25. **As the angels.** The life to come is higher than this present existence; the *spiritual body* is to be different from the *natural body* (1 Cor. xv. 40-56).

26. **How in the bush;** R. V., *in the place concerning the bush*, or the portion of Exodus (iii. 1-6) called "*The bush.*" The Old Testament was divided into sections, with titles corresponding to the contents, and these are alluded to in the New Testament; Rom. xi. 2, "*in Elias.*" Luke (xx. 37) says, "*even Moses;*" our Lord might have quoted other Old Testament Scriptures, but for the Sadducees' sake, whom He is addressing, He quotes from the Pentateuch, the portion they paid most reverence to.

27. **He is not the God of the dead.** The argument is, if God is the covenant God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the sense that He revealed Himself to them in special fashion, and made known in dim outline His covenant of grace, to be afterwards fulfilled by His choice of the Jewish nation, and His promise of a Messiah, then there must be a life beyond the present, for all these men died looking to the future. Jehovah would never have called Himself the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, if these holy men of old, after short lives full of earth's ills, had become "mere heaps of crumbling dust." You Sadducees acknowledge the Pentateuch and the covenant relationship therein described, and you ought to see that these men who are really within this covenant must live continuously.

The principle, "*God is the God of the living*," depends on the close relation between the life of God and the life of His children. The best illustration of the truth is the parable of the Vine (John xv. 1-8). The connection between the living God and the Patriarchs, whose God He is, is as close as that between the vine and its branches. If the vine lives, its branches live. If God is living and immortal, the Patriarchs are living and immortal. If the branches die, they cease to belong to the vine; if the patriarchs were dead, they would have ceased to have any relation to God, or God to them" (Carr).

- 28 And one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that he had answered them well, asked him, Which is the first commandment of all?<sup>1</sup>  
 29 And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments  
 30 *is*,<sup>2</sup> Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord:<sup>3</sup> and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength:  
 31 *this is* the first commandment.<sup>4</sup> And the second *is* like, *namely* this,<sup>5</sup> Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There  
 32 is none other commandment greater than these. And the scribe said unto him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth:  
 33 for there is one God;<sup>6</sup> and there is none other but he. And to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul,<sup>7</sup> and with all the strength, and to love *his* neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt-offer-

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<sup>1</sup> What commandment is first of all

<sup>2</sup> The first is

<sup>3</sup> The Lord our God, the Lord is one

<sup>4</sup> *omit* this is the first commandment

<sup>5</sup> the second is this

<sup>6</sup> Of a truth, Master, thou hast well said that he is one: and there is none other but he.

<sup>7</sup> and with all the strength

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(3) *A scribe—The first of all the commandments, 28-34:*

Matt. xxii. 35-40.

28. **One of the scribes.** Matthew is for once more precise than Mark. He says—(1) that the Pharisees heard that Jesus had silenced or gagged the Sadducees; (2) that in consequence they gathered round Him; (3) that one of them who was a lawyer stepped forward, (4) and resolved to test His skill in answering a question much debated in the schools.

**Which is the first commandment of all?** or, *What commandment is first of all?* There are great varieties of reading in MSS., but all variations of the simplest form which seems the authentic reading. The Jews divided the Pentateuch into 613 precepts, 365 prohibitions, as many as there were days in the year, and 228 commandments, as many as there were parts in the body. They distinguished between greater and lesser, and had many disputes about the greatest. Among the greater commandments they reckoned Sabbath observance, circumcision, rules of sacrifice and offering, and rules about fringes and phylacteries.

29. **The Lord our God is one Lord;** rather, *The Lord our God, the Lord is One*, the creed of Israel.

30. **And thou shalt love the Lord.** Jesus quotes from Deut. vi. 4, 5, what is commonly called the preface to the Ten Commandments, because it is really a summary of the whole ten. The words in Deuteronomy are, “with all thine *heart*, and with all thy *soul*, and with all thy *might*.” Matthew says, “heart . . . soul . . . mind;” Mark, “heart . . . soul . . . mind . . . strength;” the lawyer in replying says, “heart . . . understanding . . . soul . . . strength.”

33. **Is more than all whole burnt-offerings.** The scribe’s answer is

- 34 ings and sacrifices. And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God. And no man after that durst ask him *any question*.
- 35 And Jesus answered and said, while he taught in the temple, How say the scribes that Christ is the son of David?
- 36 For David himself said by <sup>1</sup> the Holy Ghost,  
The LORD said to my Lord,  
Sit thou on my right hand,  
Till I make thine enemies thy footstool.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> in<sup>2</sup> the footstool of thy feet, *or* underneath thy feet

made of quotations from the prophets which exalt the moral over the ceremonial law (Ps. li. 16 ; Hos. vi. 6 ; Mic. vi. 6-8). That ceremonial law is now abrogated, but the moral law as Jesus quoted it from the Old Testament is still of universal application. The scribe's enthusiastic appreciation of Jesus' answer, and our Lord's reply, are recorded by Mark only, and are extremely interesting. The scribe's admiration was evidently quite sincere. He addresses Jesus with the title of Rabbi, and thereby admits Him to be one of the order of teachers ; his address is really an answer to the question of the deputation from the Sanhedrin. His words seem to imply that some of the scribes were beginning to understand not merely our Lord's teaching about the spiritual meaning of the law, and the difference between its essence and accidents, but also that there was a distinct sympathy between the ideas of Jesus and those of the greater prophets. He expresses all this with earnestness and rapid eloquence. He seems almost the first-fruits of those of the sect of the Pharisees who afterwards believed.

34. Thou art not far from the kingdom of God. The scribe had discovered the worthlessness of all service without love, but he had not found out that the only way to win to worthy service is to throw oneself on the redeeming mercy of God revealed in Christ. He was not far from the kingdom, but he had not entered it. If thou art not far, enter in, else it would have been better to have been far off.

5. *Jesus' counter question—The Son of David*, xii. 35-37 :

Matt. xxii. 41-45 ; Luke xx. 41-44.

35. How say the scribes that Christ is the Son of David ? rather, *that the Christ is the Son of David*. The question was put suddenly in the hearing of the Pharisees, perhaps to guide that scribe within the kingdom at whose entrance he stood. He had learned to see that love is the fulfilling of the law, and so to penetrate into the heart of Old Testament *precepts* ; could he discern as clearly the deepest meaning of Old Testament *promises*, and see in Jesus, the Son of God as well as the Son of David, the One in whom all these promises were yea and amen ? Could he perceive that the fulfilment of all the Old Testament was summarized in the incarnation and work of Christ ? Matthew enables us to see the drift of Jesus' questions more clearly. First He asked, *What think ye of the Christ ? Whose Son is He ?* The familiar answer sprang to their lips, *The Son of David*. Then came the question of the text.

- 37 David therefore himself calleth him Lord ; and whence is he *then* his son ? And the common people <sup>1</sup> heard him gladly.
- 38 And he said unto them in his doctrine, Beware of the scribes, which love to go in long clothing, and *love* salutations
- 39 in the market-places, and the chief seats in the synagogues,
- 40 and the uppermost rooms at feasts ; which devour <sup>2</sup> widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers : <sup>3</sup> these shall receive greater damnation. <sup>4</sup>
- 41 And Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how

<sup>1</sup> the great crowd<sup>2</sup> chief places at feasts : they which devour<sup>3</sup> even while for a pretence they make long prayers<sup>4</sup> condemnation

37. **Calleth Him Lord.** Jesus quotes from Ps. cx., which (1) among the great majority of Jewish interpreters was reckoned *Messianic*, (2) and is the oftenest quoted psalm in the New Testament. His desire was to show that the Jewish nation led by their rulers were not seeking a Divine Messiah, and therefore did not see in Him the Messiah's signs.

**The common people**, or *the great multitude or crowd*, but not the Pharisees ; and Jesus was about to make the severance between Him and the ruling classes complete.

6. *Beware of the scribes*, 38-40 : Matt. xxiii. ; Luke xx. 46, 47.

38. **Beware.** These three verses which describe—(1) the ambition, (2) the avarice, (3) the hypocrisy of the scribes, are a short summary of the long address in Matt. xxiii. The address was given, Luke tells us, in the audience of all the people.

**Long clothing**, long flowing robes with broad phylacteries and long fringes.

**Market-places.** The chief places of resort where there were booths for sale of fruit, confections, etc.

39. **Chief seats.** Special seats were reserved in the synagogue, in front of the ark with the law, for the elders or rulers.

**Uppermost rooms.** *Places or seats* at feasts.

40. **Devour widows' houses**, etc. Their pretended piety had given them positions of trust, as guardians of widows and orphans, and they rob those under their care. Josephus tells us that the Pharisees had frequently very great influence over the Jewish women, and used it as our Lord describes.

**For a pretence make long prayers.** "In their seven classes of Pharisees the Talmudic writers place *Shechemites*, Pharisees from self-interest ; *stumblers*, so mock modest that they will not raise their feet from the ground ; *bleeders*, so mock modest that because they will not raise their eyes, they run against walls, etc. Thus the Jewish writers themselves depict the Pharisees as the 'Tartuffes of antiquity' (Farrar).

7. *The widow's two mites*, xii. 41-44 : Luke xxi. 1-4.

41. **Treasury.** In the great central court of the temple into which women might go, stood on one of the sides thirteen brazen chests called the *treasury*, for receiving the people's offerings—nine for the sacrifice-tribute or money gifts instead of sacrifices, and four for free-will offerings.



the people cast money into the treasury : and many that were  
 42 rich cast in much. And there came a certain poor widow,  
 43 and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing. And he  
 called *unto him* his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I  
 say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in than  
 44 all they which have cast into the treasury : for all *they* did  
 cast in of their abundance ;<sup>1</sup> but she of her want did cast in  
 all that she had, *even* all her living.

CHAP. XIII. 1 And as he went out of the temple, one of his  
 disciples saith unto him, Master, see what manner of stones  
 2 and what buildings *are here* !<sup>2</sup> And Jesus answering, said

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1 of their superfluity

2 and what manner of buildings

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42. **Two mites.** The smallest copper coin in use among the Jews, two of which was the *smallest offering allowed* to be given into the treasury.

43. **Hath cast more in,** although it was the smallest offering possible. Amid all the chaff of seeming religion Jesus picked out the grain of spirituality. God measures our charity not by its amount, but by our means, and by the spirit in which we give. Those who give most often give the least.

44. **Of their abundance, of their superfluity, out of their overplus.** The point which our Lord enforces by the remark is that the essence of charity is self-denial.

8. *The destruction of Jerusalem, and the end of the world, xiii. :*

Matt. xxiv. ; Luke xxi. 5-36.

Mark omits—(1) *the incident of the Greeks, who ask to see Jesus* (John xii. 20-22) ; (2) *His exclamations of triumph* (John xii. 23) ; (3) *the prediction of the Passion* (John xii. 24-28) ; (4) *the heavenly voice* (John xii. 28-30) ; (5) *the prediction of triumph through suffering* (John xii. 31-36) ; (6) *His rejection by the people* (John xii. 37-50).

1. **As he went out.** Mark resumes, when after this final rejection our Lord left the temple on Tuesday afternoon never to return. As they went out, His disciples, Galilean peasants, admired the great stones. Jesus, whose thoughts were upon the future, predicted the destruction of the temple in words which have been literally fulfilled. They went in silence across the Kedron valley towards Bethany. When they reached the crest of Olivet, Jesus sat down with His face to the temple, and His disciples who sat next Him asked Him to tell them more particularly about those things He had mysteriously spoken of—(1) the destruction of the temple ; (2) the sign of His coming ; and (3) the signs of the end of the world. In His answer our Lord follows the order of their questions, but, as in Old Testament prophecy, the event in the foreground is always surrounded with a halo which shades off into the far future, and the destruction of Jerusalem is itself a prophecy of the end of all things.

**What manner of stones and what buildings are here, or and what manner of buildings.** The temple built by Herod the Great was the wonder not merely of Galileans and Judeans, but of strangers coming from all parts of the world. It was specially famous for the size of the stones built into the walls. In one part of the edifice, *each* of the stones, Josephus says, was "in

unto him, Seest thou these great buildings? there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.

- 3 And as he sat upon the mount of Olives over against the temple, Peter and James and John and Andrew asked him  
4 privately, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what *shall*  
5 *be* the sign when all these things shall be fulfilled?<sup>1</sup> And Jesus answering them, began to say, Take heed lest any *man*

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<sup>1</sup> are all about to be accomplished

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length forty-three feet nine inches, in height fourteen feet, and in breadth about twenty-one feet." He also says that some of the stones were 78 feet 9 inches long, 8 feet 9 inches high, and 10 feet 6 inches broad. The buildings included magnificent columns, arches, and porticoes, some of which were the offerings of the faithful. The disciples thought more of them than of the widow's mites.

2. There shall not be left one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down, or *that shall not be loosened down*. The prediction describes not merely the destruction in the end, but the gradual work of demolition. It has been fulfilled in the most literal fashion. The engineers of the Palestine Exploration Fund tell us that there is nothing left where it stood in the Haram or sanctuary wall, save perhaps the south-west corner, and a portion of the wall under Mahkama. No portion remains of what Jesus and His disciples were gazing at. The temple was destroyed by fire at the taking of Jerusalem in spite of the efforts made by Titus to save it, and its destruction was completed in later rebellions. "It is not the Jewish temple that is to be eternal."

3. The Mount of Olives is a ridge rather more than a mile long, running north and south, covering the whole eastern side of the city, and separating and screening it from the bare waste land, "the wilderness" which lies beyond it, and filled up the space between the Mount of Olives and the Dead Sea. The northern part of the ridge forms a separate hill, *Scopus*, which is separated from the city by a plain almost a mile wide; the southern, the Mount of Olives of history, is divided from the city only by the narrow ravine of the brook Kedron. The southern eminence is only 300 feet higher than the Temple Mount, and comparatively close to it. The traveller descends from the Golden Gateway by a sudden steep declivity, and no sooner reaches the bed of the brook than the ascent of the hill begins. It was this hill that was the scene of David's flight, of Solomon's idolatry, of the triumphal entry of Jesus, of His agony and betrayal. (See Map, p. 184.)

Over against the temple, looking to it across the steep narrow valley of the Kedron, from which the buildings seemed all white marble and gold.

Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew. The names are given by Mark only, who in this verse associates Andrew with Peter, James, and John, placing him however last, although he was the first called to be a disciple.

(1) *The destruction of Jerusalem*, xiii. 5-23.

5. Take heed. Our Lord is anxious to make His disciples know that there is suffering before Him and them. "The four moral keynotes of this discourse on the last things are *Beware, Watch, Endure, Pray*" (Farrar).

- 6 deceive you : for many shall come in my name, saying, I am  
 7 *Christ* ; and shall deceive many.<sup>1</sup> And when ye shall hear  
 of wars and rumours of wars, be ye not troubled : for *such*  
 8 *things* must needs be ; but the end *shall* not *be* yet. For  
 nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against king-  
 dom : and there shall be earthquakes in divers places, and  
 there shall be famines and troubles : these *are* the beginnings  
 of sorrows.<sup>2</sup>
- 9 But take heed to yourselves : for they shall deliver you up  
 to councils ; and in the synagogues ye shall be beaten : and

<sup>1</sup> lead many astray<sup>2</sup> these things are the beginnings of travail

6. **I am Christ.** *I am the Christ*, or *I am he*. Compare 1 John ii. 18 : " Even now there are many antichrists, whereby we know that it is the last time."

7. **When ye shall hear of wars.** The forty years between the crucifixion of Christ and the destruction of Jerusalem were full of disturbances historical and natural. The Jews rose in real or threatened insurrection in the reigns of Caligula, Claudius, and Nero. Immediately before the destruction of Jerusalem, the partisans of Galba, Otho, Vitellius, and finally Vespasian, filled the empire with the horrors of civil war, when rival Roman armies met and fought each other.

8. **Nation shall rise against nation.** The Jews rose against the Romans, and were put down with massacres at Alexandria, Seleucia (where 50,000 perished), Cæsarea, Ascalon, Alexandria, and Tyre. The Germans rose more than once against the Romans, the Britons under Caradoc and Boadicea, the Jews in final insurrection in 66 A.D., and the Gauls in 69 A.D.

**Famines.** The reign of Claudius was a period of continual scarcity, which came to a height in the great famine of 50 A.D.

**Pestilences.** A great pestilence, spoken of with horror by Tacitus and Suetonius, swept off 30,000 persons in Rome in the year 65 A.D.

**Earthquakes.** Probably at no one period of the world's history were so many earthquakes crowded together within such brief limits of time. We read of them in Rome, Crete, Phrygia, the province of Asia, Achaia, Syria, and Macedonia.

**These are the beginnings of sorrow, or of travail, of birth pangs.** The word used is not a common one. It occurs only four times :—Matt. xxiv. 8 ; Acts ii. 24 ; 1 Thess. v. 3, " Then sudden destruction cometh upon them as *travail* upon a woman with child." With the fall of Jerusalem an old age passed away, and a new age was born into the world ; these terrible commotions were the travail pangs of the Christian era, " the birth pangs of the Messiah," to use a Jewish phrase. They are to come again, in fiercer force and on wider scale, to usher in the end of all things ; for then, as commonly, as Niebuhr has remarked, physical disturbances accompany great historic events.

9. **To councils.** The local Sanhedrin, or the Sanhedrin in Jerusalem. Peter and John were taken before the Sanhedrin (Acts iv. 3-21) ; Peter was ordered to be brought (Acts v. 17, 27-41) ; Paul was brought before them (Acts xxiii. 1).

**Shall be beaten in the synagogues.** According to Jewish custom, punish-

ye shall be brought before rulers and kings for my sake, for a  
 10 testimony against them. And the gospel must first be pub-  
 11 lished among all nations.<sup>1</sup> But when they shall lead *you*,<sup>2</sup>  
 and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall  
 speak,<sup>3</sup> neither do ye premeditate:<sup>4</sup> but whatsoever shall be  
 given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that  
 12 speak, but the Holy Ghost. Now the brother shall betray  
 the brother to death, and the father the son; and children  
 shall rise up against *their* parents, and shall cause them to  
 13 be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all *men* for my  
 name's sake: but he that shall endure unto the end, the same  
 shall be saved.

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<sup>1</sup> first be preached unto all the nations

<sup>2</sup> But when they shall lead you *to judgment*

<sup>3</sup> be not anxious beforehand what ye shall speak

<sup>4</sup> *omit* neither do ye premeditate

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ment was administered in presence of the judges, and the local Sanhedrin sat in the synagogues. It will always happen that worldly ecclesiastics will persecute true Christians, the best friends of the Church. Paul was scourged five times by the Jews (2 Cor. xi. 24).

**Ye shall be brought before rulers and kings.** *Roman governors*, proconsuls, and procurators. Paul was brought before Claudius Lysias (Acts xxi. 34-37), before Felix (Acts xxiv. 10-22), before Festus (Acts xxv. 1-11). *Kings*, whether *tributary kings or emperors*. Paul stood before Agrippa (Acts xxvi. 1-23) and before Nero (2 Tim. iv. 16). Multitudes of Christians in the Apostolic and post-Apostolic Church had the same experience.

**10. The gospel must be first published among all nations.** Matt. xxiv. 14: *in all the world*. Before the destruction of Jerusalem the gospel had been preached in almost all parts of the Roman Empire, from Spain to Syria, and from Arabia to Italy. Our Lord encourages His disciples by telling them that however severe their trials, the gospel will have fairly taken root in the world before the crisis comes.

**11. Take no thought beforehand;** R. V., *Be not anxious beforehand, or have no undue care or anxiety*. Let it not be that—

“The native hue of resolution  
 Is sicklied o’er with the pale cast of thought.”

Christ’s advocates will be furnished with full instructions. When we are engaged in the service of Christ, we may depend upon the aid of the Spirit of Christ (comp. Matt. x. 19, 20).

**13. Endure.** The word means more than passive endurance; it includes the idea of heroic *perseverance*, which in the end triumphs over temptations, persecutions, and hindrances, and so wins that everlasting salvation which leads to endless life in glory. Perseverance gains the crown. The salvation promised in the text is more than a mere deliverance from evil; it is an everlasting blessedness which shall be an abundant recompense for all services and sufferings. The years that the locust has eaten will be restored (Jel ii 25; comp. also Ps. xc. 15).

14 But when ye shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet,<sup>1</sup> standing where it ought

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<sup>1</sup> omit spoken of by Daniel the prophet

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**14. But when ye shall see.** The earlier portion of this chapter is more easily understood when the reader knows the outline of history of Palestine between our Lord's crucifixion and the destruction of Jerusalem. Our Lord was crucified in the year 33 A.D., and in 36 A.D. Pilate was recalled to Rome and deposed from his governorship. In 41 A.D. Herod Agrippa was permitted by the Emperor Claudius to gather together in one kingdom the dominions of his grandfather Herod the Great. He fortified Jerusalem, but was not allowed to complete the works. At his death, A.D. 44, the kingdom was abolished, and Roman governors were appointed. They were rapidly changed, and oppressed the people beyond measure, provoking partial insurrection. In 53 A.D., Felix, before whom Paul was brought, was appointed procurator, and, as Tacitus said, "wielded the power of a king in the spirit of a slave." His cruelties were notorious. He was succeeded in 60 A.D. by Festus, an upright and wise ruler, who was in power for two years. Albinus was made procurator in 62 A.D., and his cruelty and greed made the people almost ripe for revolt. Gessius Florus, who succeeded in 65 A.D., was even more cruel and rapacious. The unfortunate Jews, unable any longer to bear his tyrannical rule, rose in rebellion in 66 A.D. At the time, however, when united action was supremely necessary, furious conflicts arose between the factions, until at length the Zealots overcame all the more moderate parties, and dominated the nation. The Roman prefect of Syria, Cestius Gallus, advancing with an army, laid siege to Jerusalem, when the Christians, forewarned by these words of our Lord, fled to the mountains to Pella. The Zealots repulsed the attack, and following up their advantage, pursued and completely defeated the Romans at Beth-horon. The war was then conducted for three years with unexampled ferocity on both sides. The Romans under Vespasian set themselves to reduce the whole country by almost exterminating the people. In the spring of 70 A.D., Titus, the son of the Emperor Vespasian, had completed the conquest of the country, and proceeded to invest Jerusalem. The city was strongly fortified, and well provided against a siege; but the wretched defenders were divided into three hostile factions, who slaughtered each other in the streets of Jerusalem, and even in the temple courts. They burned the grain and other provisions in their mad violence. Meanwhile the Romans had carried the first and second walls by the month of April. A trench and rampart of earth was constructed all round the city, and the wretched inhabitants were reduced to the most frightful extremities of starvation. In the second week of June the Castle of Antonia was taken by surprise, and the Romans were able to pour troops into the temple and into the streets of Jerusalem. From June 23 to July 15, the besiegers and defenders fought hand to hand in the temple courts and narrow streets. On July 15 the temple was accidentally burnt. The Jews still defended the upper city or Zion until September 11, when the Romans carried the place by assault and massacred the defenders.

**The abomination of desolation** (Dan. ix. 27, xi. 31, xii. 11). This passage has been variously explained. Two ideas may guide us: (1) It is given as a sign of the impending destruction of Jerusalem, and as a warning to the Christians to fly, and therefore cannot mean the final desecration of the

not, (let him that readeth understand,) then let them that be  
 15 in Judea flee to the mountains: and let him that is on the  
 house-top not go down into the house, neither enter *therein*,  
 16 to take any thing out of his house:<sup>1</sup> and let him that is in the  
 17 field not turn back again for to take up his garment.<sup>2</sup> But  
 woe to them that are with child, and to them that give suck  
 18 in those days! And pray ye that your flight be not in the  
 19 winter.<sup>3</sup> For *in* those days shall be affliction, such as was  
 not from the beginning of the creation which God created

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<sup>1</sup> not go down nor enter in to take any thing out of his house

<sup>2</sup> nor return back to take his cloak

<sup>3</sup> that it be not in the winter

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temple by Roman armies after the siege; (2) Luke xxi. 20 implies that it is connected with a siege of Jerusalem. During the first siege under Cestius (68 A.D.) the Zealots got possession of the temple, and they made the holy place "a garrison and stronghold" of their tyrannous and bloody rule. The outrages of lust and murder perpetrated by the Zealots in the holy place are probably what our Lord refers to.

**Flee to the mountains.** The Christians remembering these words of the Lord fled, at the raising of the first siege by Cestius Gallus, away from Judea to the hilly country opposite Bethabara and the Bethshean ford, to Pella, one of the cities of the Decapolis, which continued for long years to be the seat of the "Church of Jerusalem." "Somewhere on the slopes of Gilead, near the scene of Jacob's first view of the land of his descendants, and of the capital of the exiled David, was *Pella*, so called by the Macedonian Greeks from the springing fountain, which likened it to the birthplace of their own Alexander. . . . From these heights Abner in his flight from the Philistines, and David in his flight from Absalom, and the Israelites on their way to Babylon, and the Christian Jews of Pella, caught the last sight of their familiar mountains" (Stanley).

15. **House-top.** The houses in Jerusalem streets were built in a continuous line with flat roofs, and some had stairs from the roof by outside wall to the ground.

16. **Not turn back again for to take up his garment.** *Not return back* (to his house) *to take his cloak* or *abba*, which he did not need when at work, but which he was accustomed to use when he slept in the fields or anywhere in the open air.

17. **Them that give suck** (Luke xxiii. 28). The heart of Jesus feels most for them that suffer most; and in time of insurrection or conquest it is not the man but the woman and the child that suffer most.

18. **In winter.** The disciples no doubt prayed. The siege was not in winter. The Roman troops first environed the city in October, when the weather is still mild; and the final siege began in April or May.

19. **Such as was not from the beginning of creation.** The siege of Jerusalem exceeded in accumulated horrors any other. The city was peopled by three factions, who left off guard on the walls against the Romans to slay each other within the city; and the frightful famine caused by the suicidal burning of the granaries, drove every human emotion, save vindic-

20 unto this time, neither shall be.<sup>1</sup> And except that the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh should be saved : but for the elect's sake, whom he hath chosen, he hath shortened the  
 21 days. And then if any man shall say to you, Lo, here is  
 22 Christ ;<sup>2</sup> or, lo, *he is* there ; believe *him* not : for false Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall show signs and  
 23 wonders, to seduce,<sup>3</sup> if *it were* possible, even the elect. But take ye heed : behold, I have foretold you all things.

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<sup>1</sup> shall be tribulation such as there hath not been the like from the beginning of the creation which God created until now, and never shall be

<sup>2</sup> the Christ

<sup>3</sup> lead astray

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tive passion, out of the breasts of the inhabitants. "Every kind feeling, love, respect, natural affection, were extinct through the all-absorbing want. Wives would snatch the last morsel from husbands, children from parents, mothers from children. They would intercept even their own milk from their pining babes . . . old men were scourged till they surrendered the food to which their hands clung desperately, and even were dragged about by the hair till they gave up what they had. Children were seized as they hung upon the miserable morsels they had got, whirled around and dashed on the pavement. . . . Tortures which cannot be related were employed against those who had a loaf or a handful of barley." If any miserable wretches crawled for food near the Roman lines, they were seized, and if they defended themselves in the slightest, they were crucified by the Roman troops. Sometimes as many as five hundred miserable beings were seen from the walls, writhing on crosses erected within the Roman lines. Other sieges and defences have been as heroic ; what makes this one unparalleled is the mingling of heroic defence with the most fiendish cruelties practised by the defenders on each other. Well might Josephus, unconsciously repeating the words of our Lord, say : "All calamities, from the beginning of time, seem to me to shrink to nothing in comparison with those of the Jews." (For the dreadful story of the siege and destruction of Jerusalem, see Josephus' *Wars of the Jews* ; Milman's *History of the Jews*, ii. 16.)

20. *Shortened those days.* They were shortened—(1) by the order of Claudius forbidding Herod Agrippa from completing the fortifications ; (2) by the wars of factions within the city ; (3) by the burning of the stores of provisions which were sufficient for a siege of several years ; (4) by the abandonment of the towers of the fortifications by the Jews on the approach of Titus ; (5) by the vigorous storming of the city by the Romans. Titus, the Roman general, who commanded at the siege, was surprised at his comparatively speedy success. "God has fought for us ; what could human hands or engines do against these towers ?"

For the elect's sake. "And we know that to them that love God all things work together for good, even to them that are called according to His purpose" (Rom. viii. 28).

22. *False Christs.* This sign, which is to be more fully fulfilled before the Second Coming of Christ, was also seen at the destruction of Jerusalem, when, as Josephus tells us, impostors prevailed on crowds to follow them to the wilderness by promises of miracles.

24 But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be  
 25 darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars  
 of heaven shall fall,<sup>1</sup> and the powers that are in heaven<sup>2</sup> shall  
 26 be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming  
 27 in the clouds with great power and glory. And then shall he  
 send his angels, and shall gather together his elect from the  
 four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the utter-  
 most part of heaven.

28 Now learn a parable of the fig-tree ; When her branch is  
 yet tender,<sup>3</sup> and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is  
 29 near : so ye, in like manner, when ye shall see these things

<sup>1</sup> shall be falling out of the heavens

<sup>2</sup> in the heavens

<sup>3</sup> Now from the fig-tree learn her parable : When her branch is now become tender

(2) *The Second Coming of Christ*, xiii. 24-31.

24. In those days. "He to whom 'a thousand years are as one day, and one day as a thousand years,' to whom there is no past or future, but one eternal present, passes from one chapter to another in the history of the world with the ease of One who seeth all things clearly revealed" (Maclear).

The sun shall be darkened. Our Lord is speaking here language as apocalyptic as that in Revelation, and hence His words need not be taken literally any more than the words "the outlook is gloomy" of a man on whom trouble has come ; but still there is a reference to the "new heavens and the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (compare 2 Pet. iii. 7-13 ; Rev. xxi.).

25. The powers that are in the heaven ; rather, *in the heavens*. *The powers of the heavens* (Matthew). This obscure phrase, found only here and in the parallel passages in Matthew and Luke, probably denotes the physical forces which control the movements of the heavenly bodies.

26. Then shall they see the Son of man coming. The words of our Lord may be taken throughout to refer to more than one event ; for prophecy sees in one world-crisis the premonition of others, and finally of the end of all things. The Son of man comes in every great world-crisis (Matt. xvi. 17 and 28), and each coming, seen like all spiritual events, by the soul and not by the senses, is a foreshadowing of His coming when every eye shall see Him (Rev. i. 7). Our Lord, when speaking of those comings of His, uses the name which most thoroughly shows Him to be in communion with mankind He comes to save. "For neither doth the Father judge any man, but He hath given all judgment unto the Son. . . . And gave Him authority to execute judgment, *because He is the Son of man*" (John v. 27).

27. Four winds, *i.e. from all the quarters*.

28. Learn a parable of the fig-tree ; rather, *From the fig-tree learn its parable*, the parable that it is always speaking if men have only ears to hear, that the sequence of events is as sure in the world of history, and in the sphere of moral order and conscience, as it is in nature.

When her branch is yet tender. *When its branch is now become tender, or as soon as its branch becomes tender, or ready to sprout into buds*. The sprouting of the fig-tree twigs was a recognized sign of ripening of the barley



30 come to pass, know that it is nigh, *even* at the doors. Verily  
 I say unto you, that this generation shall not pass, till all  
 31 these things be done. Heaven and earth shall pass away :  
 32 but my words shall not pass away. But of that day and  
*that* hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in  
 33 heaven, neither the Son, but the Father. Take ye heed,  
 34 watch and pray : for ye know not when the time is. *For the*  
*Son of man* is as a man taking a far journey,<sup>1</sup> who left his  
 house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man  
 35 his work, and commanded the porter to watch. Watch ye  
 therefore : for ye know not when the master of the house  
 cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cock-crowing, or in  
 36 the morning : lest, coming suddenly, he find you sleeping.  
 37 And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch.

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<sup>1</sup> It is as when a man, sojourning in another country

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harvest, and of the presence of summer ; the signs our Lord had given were as sure indications of the fall of Jerusalem and of future world-crises. The disciples are told to read the signs and not be like the Pharisees (Matt. xvi. 2, 3).

30. **This generation shall not pass.** Our Lord has been speaking of two things, the one the sign and foreshadowing of the other, and the double view-point is in this verse also : (1) Some of those with Him will see in their time the destruction of Jerusalem ; (2) the race of men will last till the end of all things come.

(3) *Be watchful, 32-37.*

32. **Neither the Son.** As *Son of man*, our Lord knew only what the Father revealed to Him ; as *Son of God* He is omniscient.

33. **Take ye heed, watch and pray.** Our Lord's discourse on the last things is full of solemn warning to be prepared for their approach, and the continual repetition of the words *take heed* and *watch*, is a characteristic of this Gospel. This exhortation to watchfulness is enforced in Matthew's Gospel by four parables : *The good-man and the thief*, *the unfaithful upper-servant*, *the ten virgins*, and *the talents*. Luke in a different connection (xii. 37-40) prefaces Matthew's second parable with a fifth, *the waiting-servants*, and Mark adds a sixth parable, *the porter*. The six parables all spoken at the same time repeat in picturesque variety the solemn warning *watch*, while the parable of the talents adds *and work*.

35. **At even, or at midnight, or at cock-crowing, or in the morning.** These are the Roman and not the earlier Jewish modes of reckoning time (vi. 48). Our Lord here takes His language from the usual descriptions of the work of the priest, whose duty it was to superintend the night-guard at the temple, and see that they were watching. The "captain of the temple" went his rounds during the night. He came suddenly and unexpectedly, no one knew when ; sometimes at one hour, sometimes at another ; at even, midnight, cock-crowing, or morning. He came and knocked, and they opened to him. If any guard was found asleep on duty, he was either beaten or his clothes were set fire to.

- CHAP. XIV. 1 After two days was *the feast* of the passover, and of unleavened bread :<sup>1</sup> and the chief priests and the scribes sought how they might take him by craft, and put *him* to death. But they said, Not on the feast *day*, lest there be an uproar<sup>2</sup> of the people.
- 3 And being in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at meat, there came a woman having an alabaster box

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<sup>1</sup> Now after two days was *the feast* of the passover and the unleavened bread

<sup>2</sup> tumult or riot

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#### IV.—WEDNESDAY, xiv. 1, 2, and 10, 11.

*Jesus in quiet in Bethany; Judas the traitor at Jerusalem.*

1. After two days. From the Mount of Olives. After the mysterious night-discourse with His disciples our Lord went back to Bethany and spent Wednesday in calm seclusion, preparing Himself for the supreme agony of the two following days. On the way as He entered Bethany, He told His disciples plainly what was before Him. "Ye know that after two days is the Passover, *and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified*" (Matt. xxvi. 1, 2).

Of the passover and of unleavened bread. The *Passover* was held on the 14th Nisan; the *feast of Unleavened Bread* began on the 15th, and lasted seven days (Ex. xii. 15-20). They were commonly spoken of as one feast.

The chief priests and scribes. While our Lord was in retirement on the Wednesday, the *Sanhedrin* met at Jerusalem to plot His death. Jesus spent His nights at Bethany, and when He came to Jerusalem was always in the temple surrounded by the people. His seizure in public would provoke a tumult. Pilate had come down from Cæsarea, and the Roman guard was increased as was usual during the great festivities. On the first sign of an uproar among the people, the Romans would interfere. Hence they schemed how to take Him *by craft*, for they had found it impossible to entrap Him by subtle argument (xii. 18-37), to alarm the Roman Government (xii. 13-17), or to take Him by force (xiv. 2). They were prepared to wait until after the feast, when the treachery of Judas (10, 11) gave them an opportunity not to be neglected.

[*The anointing at Bethany*, 3-9: Matt. xxvi. 6-13; John xii. 1-8.]

3. And being in Bethany. This incident took place on the evening of the Saturday (Jewish Sabbath, which ended at sunset) previously, and is doubtless inserted here out of its place in order to prepare the way for the account of the treachery of Judas.

Simon the leper. One who had been a leper, but was cured. John tells us that "they made Him a supper there; and Martha served: but Lazarus was one of them that sat at meat with Him" (John xii. 2). Simon was probably a near relative of Lazarus. The conjecture that he was the father of Lazarus, and that Lazarus was the rich young ruler who went away sorrowful from Jesus in the Perea, although plausible, has no real foundation.

A woman. Mary the sister of Lazarus (John xii. 2, 3).

Alabaster box; lit., *an alabaster of perfume* (Herodotus iii. 20). Small

of ointment of spikenard very precious ; and she brake the  
 4 box, and poured *it* on his head. And there were some that  
 had indignation within themselves, and said, Why was this  
 5 waste of ointment made ? For it might have been sold for  
 more than three hundred pence, and have been given to the  
 6 poor. And they murmured against her. And Jesus said,  
 Let her alone ; why trouble ye her ? she hath wrought a good  
 7 work on me. For ye have the poor with you always, and  
 whensoever ye will ye may do them good : but me ye have  
 8 not always. She hath done what she could : she is come  
 9 aforehand to anoint my body to the burying.<sup>1</sup> Verily I say  
 unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached through-  
 out the whole world, *this* also that she hath done shall be  
 spoken of for a memorial of her.

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<sup>1</sup> she hath anointed my body aforehand for the burying

vases or flasks for holding rare ointments or perfumes were manufactured at Alabastron in Egypt out of a stone found in the neighbourhood, and the word *alabaster* came to be used for all vessels for holding scents, wherever made or of whatever material.

Spikenard ; R. V., margin, *pistic nard* or *pure nard*. This perfume was probably that gathered in the hilly parts of India in Nepaul and the neighbourhood, brought down the Ganges and thence into the Roman Empire. It was one of the costliest ointments known to the ancients.

4. **There were some.** The hardy Galileans thought the act wasteful extravagance, and Judas having begun the murmuring (John xii. 4), others joined him. They grudged Mary the joy of ministering to her Lord. Greed, on Judas' part, in its demoniacal greatness growing to betrayal ! Mary's offering cost "more than three hundred pence," and the *denarius* which is translated penny was the day's wage of a labourer in Palestine (equivalent therefore to at least half a crown). Mary's offering would therefore amount to about £35.

6. **A good work.** A noble deed, beautiful in its insight and courageous faith. She knew that He was destined to die, and yet she treated Him as a king. The Messiah, although going to death, let me lavish my all on Him, was Mary's thought ; going to death, and therefore not the Messiah, let me make what I can out of Him, was Judas' thought.

7. **Me ye have not always.** They had no thought of that immediate parting, that death of agony which was filling our Lord's mind during these days. After His death, and awakened by it, there would be the ages of Christian philanthropy.

9. **Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached.** From henceforth Mary's anointing and the gospel of the cross and the rising again are to be inseparably joined ; because—(1) in our Lord's mind death and burial were so near, that the action of this loving woman *is* the anointing of His Body for the tomb ; (2) in her mind He was the Saviour who had raised her brother, and for whom she could not do too much ; (3) historically, *she* did what she could for Him ; but little, yet all she could lavishly devote at the very time

- 10 And Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, went unto the chief  
 11 priests, to betray<sup>1</sup> him unto them. And when they heard *it*,  
 they were glad, and promised to give him money. And he  
 sought how he might conveniently betray<sup>1</sup> him.  
 12 And the first day of unleavened bread, when they killed  
 the passover, his disciples said unto him, Where wilt thou  
 that we go and prepare that thou mayest eat the passover?

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<sup>1</sup> deliver him unto them

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when *He* was about to do what *He* could, all that was necessary for her and our salvation. "Christ never rode in triumph into Jerusalem but when *He* came there to suffer, nor had ever His head anointed but for His burial" (Matt. Henry). Think of the two there at supper, Mary and Judas.

10. **Judas Iscariot**, the only Judean Jew among the twelve. Both Matthew and Mark connect the treachery of Judas with Mary's anointing of Jesus at Bethany. He had not understood the many predictions of suffering and death, but at last the word *burial*, spoken at the supper-table, to justify a waste of money which his besetting sin made him grudge, and which fixed his attention, struck on his ear and made him see that the hopes of a coming kingdom on which he had fed his avarice were doomed to disappointment.

11. **Money. Thirty pieces of silver.** Four months' wages of a labouring man in Palestine. A piece of silver was a silver shekel, equal to four denarii. According to old Jewish usage, thirty shekels was the price of a slave.

#### V.—THURSDAY, xiv. 12-52.

1. *The preparation for the Passover*, xiv. 12-16 : Matt. xxvi. 17-20 ;  
 Luke xxii. 7-14.

12. **When they killed the passover.** The *paschal lamb* which was eaten at sunset had to be killed in the temple on the same day according to our reckoning [on the day previous according to Jewish, for with the Jews the day began when the first stars were seen in the evening sky]. The lamb had, according to ancient prescription,—not, however, binding in the times of Christ,—to be bought on the 10th Nisan (Ex. xii. 3), *i.e.* at this time on the Monday on which Christ had made His triumphal entry. On the afternoon of Thursday the disciples, Peter and John (Luke xxii. 8), took it to the temple, crowded with people bringing lambs to sacrifice, and there slew it with the usual ceremonies.

The whole history of our Lord's Passover is full of difficulties. Upon the whole, it seems best to believe that the Lord's Supper was not partaken on the Passover day, but on the evening before. Our Lord, knowing that His "time was at hand" (Matt. xxvi. 18), and with desire desiring to eat the Passover with His disciples before He suffered (Luke xxii. 15), anticipated the prescribed time by a day. The order of events was therefore as follows. On the evening of the 13th Nisan according to our reckoning, or rather on the 14th Nisan which began at sunset according to Jewish reckoning, our Lord sent two of His disciples to prepare the Passover for the disciple company for that evening, not for the evening following, which was the legal day. Then followed a paschal feast and the institution of the Lord's Supper ; the betrayal and capture. On the early morning of the 14th Nisan the

- 13 And he sendeth forth two of his disciples, and saith unto them, Go ye into the city, and there shall meet you a man  
 14 bearing a pitcher of water: follow him. And wheresoever he shall go in, say ye to the goodman of the house, The Master saith, Where is the<sup>1</sup> guest-chamber, where I shall eat  
 15 the passover with my disciples? And he will show<sup>2</sup> you a large upper room furnished *and* prepared:<sup>3</sup> there make ready  
 16 for us. And his disciples went forth, and came into the city, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the passover.

<sup>1</sup> my<sup>2</sup> And he will himself show<sup>3</sup> and ready

irregular meeting of the Sanhedrin was held, then its formal sitting, the trial before Pilate, and finally the crucifixion, which, as John positively says, was on *the preparation*. The lamb was offered in the temple at the evening sacrifice on *the preparation*, which was usually at 1.30 P.M., but if on a Friday, at 12.30. Our Lord therefore hung on the cross at the very time when the paschal lamb was offered in the temple.

13. Two of his disciples. Peter and John (Luke xxii. 8).

A man bearing a pitcher of water. Women usually carried the water, and so this man would be easily observed.

14. The guest-chamber. This word is rendered *inn* in Luke ii. 7. It might have been a hired room, for the inhabitants of Jerusalem were accustomed to give up freely rooms in their houses to strangers who flocked into the city to the Passover; or it might have been a room in a disciple's house. From the phrase in Matthew, "Go into the city, to such a man," it is inferred that the house belonged to a disciple; some say to Mary the mother of Mark, for in her house the disciples were accustomed to assemble after the resurrection.

16. Made ready the passover. The preparation included not merely the purchase and slaughter of the paschal lamb, but providing some unleavened cakes, three or four cups of wine mixed with water, the *charoseth* or sauce, and the bitter herbs. The house had to be carefully purged of leaven, but this purging was probably included in what the master of the house had done (ver. 15).

The passover was observed among the Jews in the time of our Lord in the following fashion. The company having taken their places, two or three flat cakes or thin biscuits of unleavened bread (Ex. xii. 18), and four cups of red wine mixed with water, being on the table before the Master of the feast—

(1) He took one of the cups, called *the cup of consecration*, and "gave thanks," tasted the cup, and passed it round.

(2) Water was then brought in, and first the president and then the others washed.

(3) The table was then set with the bitter herbs (lettuce, endive, beet, succory, and horehound), the sauce called *charoseth* (made of dates, raisins, figs, vinegar, etc., pounded and mixed together), and the paschal lamb.

(4) After thanksgiving the president took a portion of the bitter herbs, about "the size of an olive," and dipping it in the sauce ate it, as did the others.

17, 18 And in the evening he cometh with the twelve. And as they sat and did eat, Jesus said, Verily I say unto you,

(5) The second cup of wine was filled, and then followed the *haggadah* or *showing forth* (1 Cor. xi. 26). A child or proselyte present asked, *What mean ye by this service* (Ex. xii. 26)? and the president answered in prescribed fashion at great length. The first part of the *Hallel* (Ps. cxiii.-cxiv.) was sung, and the second cup was solemnly drunk.

(6) The president again washed his hands, and taking two of the cakes of unleavened bread, broke them, gave thanks, and distributed them to the company, each of whom took a portion, dipped it in the sauce and ate it. Some authorities maintain that if any *stranger* was present he was presented with a portion, but had no other share in the meal, a custom which sheds light on Jesus giving the sop to Judas.

(7) The paschal lamb was then eaten.

(8) After thanksgiving, the third cup or *cup of blessing* (1 Cor. x. 16) was handed round.

(9) Thanks were given for the food received, the fourth cup, the cup of joy was drank, the second part of the *Hallel* (Ps. cxv.-cxviii.) was sung, and the company separated.

## 2. The Passover and the Lord's Supper, xiv. 17-25.

18. And as they sat and did eat. The table was really three tables arranged thus [ ] , the fourth side being left open. Couches almost as high as the tables were placed outside on which the guests reclined, each leaning on his left arm, his feet extended outward. John was next to Jesus, with his back to our Lord, "lying on Jesus' breast," so that by bending his head backwards he could whisper to our Lord, "Who is it?" (John xiii. 25). Judas was probably next our Lord on His other side, so that Jesus could whisper to him, "Thou hast said" (Matt. xxvi. 25). The order of events seems to have been as follows:—

(1) Jesus took the cup of consecration, and having given thanks, tasted it and passed it round, saying that He had *desired* to eat this Passover (Luke xxii. 15-18).

(2) The water was brought in, and as there had been some strife among them who should do the service and wait upon the others, our Lord read them a lesson of humility by washing their feet soiled with the dust of the Bethany road (John xiii. 2-12, R. V.), and thereafter discoursed on humility (Luke xxii. 25-30; John xiii. 12-20).

(3) The table was then set.

(4) The bitter herbs were eaten. *Judas dipping his hand into the common dish of charoseth* (Matt. xxvi. 23).

(5) When the time for the *haggadah* or *showing forth* came, our Lord seems to have turned from the usual talk about the Exodus to describe His own departure, and to say plainly that one of the Twelve who had been dipping his hand in the dish with Him should betray Him. The disciples anxiously asked, Is it I? John, at a sign from Peter, whispered an inquiry to Jesus, and was told that a *sop*, a piece of the bread wrapped in the herbs, and dipped in the sauce, would be given to the traitor (John xiii. 23-26).

(6) The unleavened bread was then broken and distributed, and Jesus took a piece, and, wrapping it in a portion of the bitter herbs, dipped it in the

19 One of you which eateth with me shall betray me. And they began to be sorrowful, and to say unto him one by one, *Is it*  
 20 *I?* and another said, *Is it I?*<sup>1</sup> And he answered and said unto them, *It is* one of the twelve, that dippeth with me<sup>2</sup>  
 21 in the dish. The Son of man indeed goeth, as it is written

<sup>1</sup> and to say unto him one by one, *Is it I?*<sup>2</sup> he that dippeth with me

sauce and gave it to Judas as to a stranger, saying, *That thou doest, do quickly.* Judas left, and our Lord, no longer oppressed with the presence of the traitor, broke forth into a triumphant strain (John xiii. 31).

(7) The paschal lamb was then eaten, and immediately afterwards the order was interrupted. Our Lord (a) again took up the unleavened bread, and giving thanks, brake and distributed it, and then (b) took the "cup of blessing," gave thanks, and distributed it to them. Then followed the long discourses, the singing of the hymn, the second part of the Hallel, and the departure to Gethsemane.

Of the nine separate actions in the Passover (1), (2), (4), (5), (6), are distinctly mentioned by one or other of the Evangelists. The Jewish feast passed over into the Christian when, after the seventh action, the eating the paschal lamb, our Lord again took bread, which was not done at the Passover feast, and gave a new meaning to the third cup or "cup of blessing." It should be noticed that the Lord's Supper, with the bread and wine, represented in outline the universal sacrificial rites, whether Pagan or Jewish, with the sacrificial victim omitted. It was the framework of a sacrifice, and the victim was to be the crucified risen Saviour, not brought down on any earthly altar, but exalted to the right hand of God; and thus the seen and the unseen, the disciple company and the Master, who was at once the Sacrifice and the risen King, are brought into near and abiding fellowship.

One of you which eateth with me shall betray me; rather, *One of you shall betray me, even he that eateth with me.* The traitor's presence was a weight upon His heart, and constrained Him to speak. In earlier predictions of what awaited Him, He had spoken of betrayal (Mark ix. 31, x. 33); now He says plainly that the traitor is in the room with them.

19. They began to be sorrowful. John's account is the most graphic, "Then the disciples looked on one another, doubting of whom He spake" (John xiii. 22).

*Is it I?* The words, *And another said, Is it I?* are omitted in the best MSS. It was characteristic of the frank and open nature of the disciple company that none sought to accuse his neighbour. They were more suspicious of themselves than of each other. No one said, *Is it he?* all said, *Is it I?*

20. It is one of the twelve, that dippeth with me in the dish. This answer is just a repetition of what Jesus had previously said, and does not single out any one of the Twelve. There was but one dish of sauce, and all dipped their morsels in it; but two of the apostles were told who the traitor was. At a signal from Peter, John whispered a question to Jesus, who answered, "He it is to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it" (John xiii. 26); a symbolic action, signifying that he who received the sop was a stranger.

21. The Son of man goeth, as it is written of him. This is the first

of him : but woe to that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed ! good were it for that man if he had never been born.

- 22 And as they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and  
brake *it*,<sup>1</sup> and gave to them, and said, Take, eat :<sup>2</sup> this is my  
23 body. And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks,  
24 he gave *it* to them : and they all drank of it. And he said  
unto them, This is my blood of the new testament,<sup>3</sup> which is  
25 shed for many. Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more  
of the fruit of the vine, until that day that I drink it new in  
the kingdom of God.

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<sup>1</sup> And as they were eating, Jesus took bread ; and when he had blessed, he brake it      <sup>2</sup> Take ye      <sup>3</sup> This is my blood of the covenant

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direct statement that the Passion of Jesus was foretold in the Old Testament. Notice how Peter, re-echoing the words of his Master, speaks of the guilt of Judas (Acts i. 16-18) and of the scribes and Pharisees (Acts iv. 26-28). Probably while Jesus was speaking, Judas, in reckless defiance, whispered, *Is it I?* and Jesus calmly whispered back, in a tone low enough to be heard by him only, "Thou hast said."

22. **This is my body.** *This is the body of me.* Luke adds, "which is being given for you ;" and Paul says, "which is being broken for you." For all Christ's life was part of His work, and His sacrifice included His active as well as His passive sufferings,—His life as well as His death. It was not the first time that Jesus had spoken of His disciples eating His flesh and drinking His blood (John vi. 56-60).

24. **This is my blood of the new testament.** The best MSS. omit *new*, and *covenant* is a more exact translation than Testament : hence, *This is my blood of the covenant* : but the word *new* was said by our Lord, for it is found undoubtedly in Luke xxii. 20. There is an evident reference to Jer. xxxi. 31-34 (comp. Epistle to the Hebrews viii. and ix.), and to Ex. xxiv. 4-8. As Moses, after reading the "book of the covenant" in the audience of the people, had taken blood and sprinkled it on the people, saying, "Behold the blood of the covenant which the Lord hath made with me concerning all these things," so the blood of Christ, to be shed for the sins of His people, was to have a new and deeper purifying influence. It was to be the sign and instrument of that new promise which declared that the law of God was to be *put in their inward parts*—was to be not merely an instrument of external or ceremonial separation and sanctification, but of a true, deep, and living knowledge of God as their living Father, resting on an experience of His fatherly forgiveness of sin. This new promise of an inward life of new obedience was to be translated out of the realm of ideal life, out of the region of promise, into the realm of fulfilment or actual living experience in the hearts of His people, the new Israel, through the shedding of the blood of Christ, the blood of the new covenant or promise. Thus Matthew adds to Mark's *which is shed for many* the words *for the remission of sins* (Matt. xxvi. 28), and Paul, *This do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me* (1 Cor. xi. 25).

25. **Until the day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God.** Matthew (xxvi. 29) says, *Until . . . I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.*



- 26 And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives.
- 27 And Jesus said unto them, All ye shall be offended<sup>1</sup> because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered. But after that I am risen,<sup>2</sup> I will go before you into Galilee. But Peter said unto him, Although all shall be offended,<sup>1</sup> yet *will* not I.
- 30 And Jesus saith unto him, Verily I say unto you, That this day, *even* in this night,<sup>3</sup> before the cock crow twice, thou shalt

<sup>1</sup> made to stumble<sup>2</sup> Howbeit after I am raised up<sup>3</sup> That thou to-day, even this night

Jesus had on a previous occasion compared the kingdom to new wine (ii. 22), but then He used a word (*vínos*) which contrasted *must* with ripe wine; the word in this passage (*καίνος*) means *new* in the sense of belonging to an altogether new dispensation of things. Hence most commentators make the passage refer to the Second Coming of our Lord, when the new kingdom shall be thoroughly established in all its fulness of glory and communion between God and man. But may not the words also refer to that real fellowship with Jesus through the Holy Spirit which is the special characteristic of the Christian dispensation, and which is most vividly represented in that act of worship which is often called *the Communion*, the Lord's Supper, where He has most intimate fellowship with His people through the Holy Spirit? Ellicott says suggestively: "Even the mocking taunt of the multitude on the day of Pentecost, *These men are full of new wine* (Acts ii. 13), may have recalled the mysterious promise to the mind of the apostles, and enabled them to comprehend that it was through the gift of the Spirit that they were entering, in part at least, even then into the joy of their Lord."

3. *To the Mount of Olives.* Peter's protestation, xiv. 26-31: Matt. xxvi. 30-35; Luke xxii. 31-39; John xiii. 33, xiv. 31.

26. *Sung an hymn.* The second part of the Hallel, Ps. cxv.-cxviii.

*Into the Mount of Olives.* This 26th verse is out of its order, and should come after ver. 31; see the parallel passages in Luke and John.

27. *All ye shall be offended, shall be made to stumble.* The words were spoken while at table, and provoked Peter's indignant protestation.

*It is written.* The words are quoted from Zech. xiii. 7, "Smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered;" and the quotation is all the more suggestive that the context contains the promises of "a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem," and of a final victory won by Jehovah on the Mount of Olives.

28. *I will go before you into Galilee;* lit., *I will lead you as a shepherd.* The sheep were to be scattered for a little while; but after the resurrection had crowned the crucifixion and made the victory visible, then the flock would come together again, guided by the Shepherd. Comp. xvi. 7.

29. *Yet will not I.* Peter's assurances of constant fidelity are given more fully in Matt. xxvi. 33 and John xiii. 37.

30. *That this day, even in this night.* *To-day, this night;* for the day began at sunset.

- 31 deny me thrice. But he spake the more vehemently, If I should die with thee, I will not deny thee in any wise.<sup>1</sup> Likewise also said they all.
- 32 And they came to a place which was named Gethsemane : and he saith to his disciples, Sit ye here, while I shall pray.
- 33 And he taketh with him Peter and James and John, and
- 34 began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy ;<sup>2</sup> and saith unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death : tarry ye here, and watch. And he went forward a little, and fell

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<sup>1</sup> omit in any wise

<sup>2</sup> to be greatly amazed, and sore troubled

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Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice. Mark alone inserts the word *twice*, and the *twice* and *thrice* occur again in ver. 72. This was the form of our Lord's warning which had sunk most deeply into Peter's memory.

31. If I should die with thee. Peter was not the first apostle to express a love for their Master stronger than death. Thomas had done so before (John xi. 16). The disciples all join in Peter's protestation.

4. *Gethsemane*, 32-42 : Matt. xxvi. 36-46 ; Luke xxii. 40-46.

32. *Gethsemane*. The word means *oil-press*. They went out of the room, through the city gate (always open on the Passover night), down the steep bank of the Kedron, across the winter torrent to this garden or olive orchard at the foot of Olivet, where "Jesus oftentimes resorted with His disciples," and which Judas knew (John xviii. 1, 2).

33. *Take*th with him Peter, James, and John. They had seen the transfiguration, and they were to see the arrest, and to be near Him in His agony.

To be sore amazed (ix. 15, and xvi. 5, 6). The idea is, *stunned with astonishment*.

To be very heavy. The word used is not a common one. It occurs also in Phil. ii. 26, "For He longed after you all, and was *full of heaviness*." The Greek word is used to express the very deepest kind of sorrow, grief that distracts and frenzies. The weight of the world's sins were being borne by Him *alone*.

34. *Exceeding sorrowful*. The idea is, *sorrowful all round and round* ; not a ray of light to comfort Him in that hour of darkness, and the weight of woe crushing out His very life. "How many thousands of Thy blessed martyrs have welcomed no less tortures with smiles and gratulations ! . . . Whence had they their strength but from Thee ? If their weakness were thus undaunted and prevalent, what was Thy power ? It was the sad weight of the sin of mankind : it was the heavy burden of Thy Father's wrath for our sin, that thus pressed Thy soul, and wrung from Thee those bitter expressions" (Hall).

Tarry ye here, and watch. Our Lord had first retired with the Three ; but as His agony increased, He felt that He must be alone with His Father. Observe how Jesus retires—first to the garden with the Twelve, then into some secluded spot with the Three, then with only the humanity which He

on the ground, and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour  
 36 might pass from him.<sup>1</sup> And he said, Abba, Father, all things  
*are* possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: never-  
 37 theless not what I will, but what thou wilt. And he cometh,  
 and findeth them sleeping, and saith unto Peter, Simon,  
 38 sleepest thou? couldst not thou watch one hour? Watch  
 ye and pray, lest ye enter<sup>2</sup> into temptation. The spirit truly  
 39 *is* ready, but the flesh *is* weak.<sup>3</sup> And again he went away,

<sup>1</sup> pass away from him<sup>2</sup> that ye enter not<sup>3</sup> The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak

wore alone into the presence of His Father. No one could be with Him in the agony, none on the altar. He had to tread the wine-press alone. Yet His followers can be *near* Him in His agony. *Remain here*, He said. They can quiver in sympathy with His sorrow. *Watch*, He said.

And yet the Lord could not be alone in the presence of His Father: He would fain with shrinking of soul have let the cup pass from Him, and divested Himself of that humanity which now accompanied Him into the presence of the Father as it was afterwards to be taken by Him up into the highest heavens. But He had come to finish a work given Him to do.

35. **The hour might pass.** The temptation which confronted our Lord in the wilderness (Luke iv. 6, 7), which met Him on the road to Cæsarea Philippi (Mark viii. 33),—Messiahship without the cross, salvation without atonement,—met Him here for the last time with gathered and overwhelming force.

36. **Abba, Father.** Mark preserves the very word. The spirit of the Son clung to the Father in the agony; therefore we, even in trouble, can know that we are not separate from God, who is, through it all and while sending it upon us, our Father.

37. **He cometh.** There was an intermission in the agony. Luke tells us in two verses whose authenticity is somewhat doubtful—(1) that in the intermission an angel from heaven appeared to strengthen Him; (2) that He was in an *agony*, and that the sweat dropped from Him like blood gout.

Unto Peter. He had promised to die for Jesus, and he could not keep awake for Him; small temptations are often harder than great ones.

**Watch one hour.** An *hour* of agony. "If eternal death be unsufferable, if every sin deserve eternal death, what was it for Thy soul in this short time of Thy bitter Passion, to endure those millions of eternal deaths, which all the sins of all mankind had deserved from the just hand of Thy Godhead!" (Hall).

38. **The flesh is weak.** The disciples and Jesus Himself are included in the thought; but while He prayed, they slept. "The consideration of the weakness and infirmity of our flesh should quicken us to prayer and watchfulness when we are entering into temptation" (Matt. Henry).

39. **And again he went.** The agony returned, perhaps heightened by the sleep of the Three. The helpless, sin-ridden, salvation-needing world lay asleep around Him heedless of the morrow; He was alone in the midst; and the satanic world, false, traitorous, and despairing, was advancing to lay hold on Him, all the powers of hell behind it. The agony heightened by the solitude again fell on Him.

- 40 and prayed, and spake the same words. And when he returned, he found them asleep again; (for their eyes were  
 41 heavy;) neither wist they what to answer him. And he cometh the third time, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take *your* rest: it is enough, the hour is come; behold,  
 42 the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise up, let us go; lo, he that betrayeth me is at hand.  
 43 And immediately,<sup>1</sup> while he yet spake, cometh Judas, one of the twelve, and with him a great<sup>2</sup> multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and the scribes and the  
 44 elders. And he that betrayed him had given them a token, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he; take him,  
 45 and lead *him* away safely. And as soon as he was come, he goeth straightway to him,<sup>3</sup> and saith, Master, master; and

<sup>1</sup> straightway<sup>2</sup> omit great<sup>3</sup> And when he was come, straightway he came to him

40. Their eyes were heavy; R. V., *very heavy for sorrow* (Luke xxii. 45), the eyelids closing.

41. The third time. "The temptation of the garden divides itself, like that of the wilderness, into three acts, following close on one another" (Maclear).

It is enough. The agony in the garden had no *outward* cause. Why was it? (1) He knew what was coming; (2) Satan was tempting Him in one last desperate struggle; (3) He never felt so much alone, His faithful disciples asleep, and the traitor only awake and at work. (4) All these perhaps, but above all He was then bearing the sins and sorrows of the world. His death was not mere martyrdom; it was atonement. He saw and was feeling the extent, inveteracy, and malignity of that sin of man for which He was about to suffer.

5. *The arrest*, xiv. 43-52: Matt. xxvi. 47-56; Luke xxii. 47-53; John xviii. 3-11.

43. One of the twelve. All the synoptic Gospels have these words. The Evangelists seem to be unable to get rid of the horror in the fact, *one of the Twelve* bringing this armed multitude to seize the Master.

A great multitude, consisting of—(1) some members of the Sanhedrin, "the chief priests and elders" (Luke xxii. 52); (2) the officers and some of the temple guard of Jews under the command of the Sanhedrin (Luke xxii. 52; John xviii. 12); (3) a Roman cohort and its captain, "the band" (John xviii. 12; Acts xxi. 31); (4) servants, those doubtless armed with staves or cudgels (vers. 43, 47).

45. Kissed him; R. V. margin, *kissed Him much, kissed Him fervently* (Luke vii. 38-45, xv. 20; Acts xx. 37). "Wouldst thou know what Satan can do, and God can bear, what the basest of mankind can do, and the best of mankind can bear? Behold the lips of Judas who kisses, and the cheek of Jesus which receives the kiss" (Stier).

46 kissed him.<sup>1</sup> And they laid their hands on him, and took  
 47 him. And one of them that stood by drew a sword, and  
 48 smote a servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear. And  
 Jesus answered and said unto them, Are ye come out, as  
 49 against a thief,<sup>2</sup> with swords and *with* staves to take me? I  
 was daily with you in the temple teaching, and ye took me  
 50 not: but the scriptures must be fulfilled.<sup>3</sup> And they all for-  
 sook him, and fled.

51 And there followed him a certain young man, having a

<sup>1</sup> kissed him much

<sup>2</sup> robber or bandit

<sup>3</sup> but *this is done* that the scriptures might be fulfilled

46. And they laid their hands on him, and took him. The other Evangelists have preserved the words of Jesus at His arrest. To Judas He said, *Friend, wherefore art thou come?* or rather, in allusion to Judas' word Master, *Thou, my disciple, wherefore art thou come?* (Matt. xxvi. 50). And then, "*Judas, betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?*" (Luke xxii. 48). While John (xviii. 8) records the calm self-surrender of Jesus, "*I told you that I am He; if therefore ye seek me, let these go their way.*"

47. One of them. Peter (John xviii. 10), whose courage did not fail him, if his vigilance did. The servant's name was Malchus; Jesus healed the wound, and calmly rebuked Peter. He can at once accept our meanings and censure our deeds; and while He rebukes a servant, can heal an enemy.

48. As against a thief, as against a bandit. The words *thief* and *robber* are distinguished from each other in John x. 1; the word there translated robber is here translated thief in the A. V. A *robber* or *bandit*, one of those many freebooters with which Palestine swarmed in those evil days.

49. But the scriptures must be fulfilled, the scriptures of the prophets (Matt. xxvi. 56). Before His death, as after at Emmaus (Luke xxiv. 27), He tried to make His disciples see that all the prophets from Moses downwards looked forward to a suffering Messiah.

50. And they all forsook him, notwithstanding their protestations (ver. 31), and He is left alone with His foes, *one of the Twelve* urging with cruel words, *Hold Him fast* (Matt. xxvi. 48).

51. A certain young man. Who he was can only be conjectured. Ellicott urges that he was Lazarus, on the following very inadequate grounds. That the young man had been sleeping or watching near Gethsemane, and Lazarus lived not far off; that he was one that had courage enough to remain near Jesus when crucifixion was the fate confronting the Master, and that Lazarus, if he was the rich young ruler, had been told to be ready to *take up his cross* and follow Christ; that he wore a "linen sheet" or *sindon*, which was commonly used as a winding-sheet, and might be worn by Lazarus as a memorial of his resurrection; that he was evidently one whom they in authority wished to secure after they had let the disciples go, and the chief priests had been anxious to get hold of Lazarus (John xii. 10). Others, and probably the larger number, think that Mark was the young man, and this is founded on what perhaps is the only reason of any weight, the full details given of such a seemingly unimportant event by the Evangelist.

linen cloth cast about *his* naked *body*; and the young men  
52 laid hold on him: and he<sup>1</sup> left the linen cloth, and fled from  
them naked.

53 And they led Jesus away to the high priest: and with him  
were assembled all the<sup>2</sup> chief priests and the elders and the

<sup>1</sup> having a linen cloth cast about him, over *his* naked *body*; and they laid hold on him: but he

<sup>2</sup> and there came together with him all the

52. **Linen cloth.** The Greek word is *sindōn*, from Sind or India, and was applied to a fine muslin, in which the Egyptians wrapped their mummies (Herodotus, II. 86), and the Jews their dead. The word was also used to denote a sheet under which a man slept (Herodotus, II. x. 95), probably an Indian mosquito curtain.

#### VI.—FRIDAY, XIV. 53—XV. 47.

1. *The Jewish trial*, 53-65: Matt. xxvi. 57-68; Luke xxii. 54, 63-71; John xviii. 12-24.

53. **And they led Jesus away.** The order of events seems to have been—

(1) Jesus was taken to Annas, the father-in-law of Caiaphas, and the high priest according to *Jewish* law, who questioned Him about His teaching, His disciples, etc. During the examination He was struck by the officer in charge (John xviii. 13, 19-24).

(2) Annas sent Him to Caiaphas, who examined Him in another part of the palace, before a hastily-convened and irregular meeting of the *Sanhedrin* (Mark xiv. 53-65; Matt. xxvi. 57-68; Luke xxii. 54, 63-65).

(3) A formal meeting of *Sanhedrin* was called at daybreak, the sentence of the previous meeting confirmed, and Jesus was sent to Pilate (Mark xv. 1; Matt. xxvii.; Luke xxii. 66-71).

**To the high priest.** *To Caiaphas the high priest* (Matthew). John (xviii. 19-23) records a preliminary investigation before Annas, who briefly questioned Jesus.

*Annas* or *Hanan*, the son of Seth, had been appointed high priest in 7 A.D., and had been deposed in 14 A.D. by the arbitrary caprice of Valerius Gratus, the Roman procurator, but was universally looked on as the leader of the Jewish Sadducean aristocracy. He was the most astute man of his time, the real political chief of his people, and the determined opponent of the Pharisees. Hence in the Talmud he is loaded with opprobrious names. His son Eleazar had been made high priest in 15 A.D., and now Caiaphas, his son-in-law, whom each successive Roman procurator had found a pliant tool, had been high priest since 17 A.D. Annas lived to see five sons and a son-in-law high priests, and for nearly fifty years enjoyed the real power of the high-priesthood.

*Joseph Caiaphas*, a Sadducee, like his father-in-law, equally astute, unscrupulous, and unpatriotic, who consented to be high priest on the terms the Romans allowed, and was used by them as the Greek patriarchs of Constantinople are now by the Turks, to keep his countrymen in firmer thralldom. He had already committed himself to the policy of the death of Jesus (John xi. 49, 50).

All the chief priests, and the elders and the scribes. *The Sanhedrin.*

54 scribes. And Peter followed him afar off, even into the  
 palace of<sup>1</sup> the high priest: and he sat with the servants, and  
 55 warmed himself at the fire.<sup>2</sup> And the chief priests and all  
 the council sought for witness against Jesus to put him to  
 56 death; and found none. For many bare false witness against  
 57 him, but their witness agreed not together. And there arose  
 58 certain, and bare false witness against him, saying, We heard  
 him say, I will destroy this temple that is made with hands,  
 and within three days I will build another made without  
 59 hands. But neither so did their witness<sup>3</sup> agree together.  
 60 And the high priest stood up in the midst, and asked Jesus,  
 saying, Answerest thou nothing? what *is it which* these  
 61 witness against thee? But he held his peace, and answered  
 nothing. Again the high priest asked him, and said unto  
 62 him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed? And

<sup>1</sup> the court<sup>2</sup> in the light of the fire<sup>3</sup> And not even so did their witness

It was against the Jewish law to hold a night session of the Sanhedrin to try capital offences, but they kept themselves within the letter of the law by trying Jesus informally at night and then summoning a formal meeting at daybreak. The private examination and this irregular meeting revealed their difficulties. What charge could they bring against Him? The Sadducees were most incensed at His clearing the temple courts and preventing them making money by skilfully raising the price of pure animals for sacrifice. Annas himself had once forced up the market so high that a pair of doves could not be bought for less than a piece of gold. But they could not make zeal for the purity of the temple a charge, for every Pharisee approved of it.

54. Peter . . . sat with the servants. *His* entering to temptation (ver. 38).

55. To put him to death. They were judges bound by their law (Deut. xvi. 18) to give just judgment, and their whole thought was that He must die somehow. Murder in their hearts. Besides, it was death according to Jewish law to suborn false witnesses.

56. Agreed not. Their law required two witnesses who agreed with each other.

58. I will destroy this temple. The words which Jesus had used were, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up," not I will build it. The accusers hoped by this witness to get two charges—(1) of conspiring to destroy the temple, the pride and the support of the people of Jerusalem; and (2) of pretending to possess a wizard's power. A capital charge might follow if either was proved.

59. Neither so did their witness agree together. This statement that even these witnesses did not agree, and could not therefore be legally used as evidence, is peculiar to Mark. Caiaphas saw that he could not get a "case" from evidence, and he resolved to put the Prisoner on His oath.

61. Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed? "*I adjure Thee by the living God*" (Matt. xxvi. 63) was the legal formula for administering

Jesus said, I am : and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.  
 63 Then the high priest rent his clothes, and saith, What need  
 64 we any further witnesses? Ye have heard the blasphemy :  
 what think ye? And they all condemned him to be guilty  
 65 of death. And some began to spit on him, and to cover his  
 face, and to buffet him, and to say unto him, Prophesy : and  
 the servants did strike him with the palms of their hands.<sup>1</sup>  
 66 And as Peter was beneath in the palace,<sup>2</sup> there cometh  
 67 one of the maids of the high priest : and when she saw Peter  
 warming himself, she looked upon him, and said, And thou  
 68 also wast with Jesus of Nazareth.<sup>3</sup> But he denied, saying, I

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<sup>1</sup> and the officers received him with blows of their hands

<sup>2</sup> in the court

<sup>3</sup> with the Nazarene, Jesus

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oaths. Jesus answered, "*I am*," for the first time in solemn speech declaring that He was the Messiah.

62. Thou shalt see the Son of man. The Son of<sup>4</sup> man whom Caiaphas saw is the Son of God whom he could not see.

63. Rent his clothes. A formal act to be done in the presence of one convicted of blasphemy, like the putting on the black cap by a judge. Mark uses the word for the inner garment; Matthew, the word for the outer; both garments were rent, for according to rabbinical rules, all the garments were to be torn, and not sewn up again, "even if there were ten of them."

65. Began to spit upon him, etc. The wild beast element, too easily stirred in man, was roused in these Jewish dignitaries, unconsciously fulfilling the prophecies about the Messiah (Isa. l. 6); and the officers of the Jewish guard, following the example of the members of the Sanhedrin, received their Prisoner with blows.

2. *Peter's denials of Jesus*, xiv. 66-72 : Matt. xxvi. 69-75 ; Luke xxii. 54-62 ; John xviii. 15-18, 25-27.

66. Beneath in the palace ; R. V., *in the court*. An Oriental house is usually built round a rectangular court, and raised above it there are frequently chambers supported not on a wall, but on pillars, sometimes screened with a curtain, sometimes open. We may suppose the crowd of servants and followers, Peter among them, in the court gathered round the fire of coals, while in the room, open on one side and lighted by torches, were the members of the council and Jesus.

67. Thou also wast. The portress had admitted John, and she recognized a second, and expressed it by the word *also*.

With Jesus of Nazareth ; R. V., *with the Nazarene, Jesus*. The order of events seems to be—

(1) Shortly after Peter's entrance, the maid that kept the door accosted him, looked at him stedfastly (Luke xxii. 56, R. V.), and declared that he had been with Jesus ; he, confused with the glances of the bystanders, stammered out his *first denial*.

(2) Peter retired towards the darkness of the porch, and there (Matt.



know not, neither understand I what thou sayest. And he  
 69 went out into the porch;<sup>1</sup> and the cock crew. And a maid<sup>2</sup>  
 saw him again, and began to say to them that stood by, This  
 70 is *one* of them. And he denied it again. And a little after,  
 they that stood by said again to Peter, Surely thou art *one* of  
 them : for thou art a Galilean, and thy speech agreeth *thereto*.<sup>3</sup>  
 71 But he began to curse and to swear, *saying*, I know not this  
 72 man of whom ye speak. And the second time the cock  
 crew.<sup>4</sup> And Peter called to mind the word that Jesus said  
 unto him, Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me  
 thrice. And when he thought thereon, he wept.

<sup>1</sup> fore-court<sup>2</sup> the maid<sup>3</sup> *omit* and thy speech agreeth thereto<sup>4</sup> And straightway the cock crew the second time

xxvi. 71, 72) the maid (Mark) or another (Matthew), or the two, accused him again, and he again denied. Then the cock crew for the first time (ver. 68).

(3) Peter came back to the fire, and to disarm suspicion, conversed with the soldiers and servants, when after the lapse of an hour the third accusation was made, and Peter, assailed by the bystanders and by the kinsman of Malchus, denied with oaths (John xviii. 26).

(4) Then the cock crew a second time, and Peter remembered, and glancing towards the room where Jesus was, caught his Master's glance, and went out weeping tears of repentance. Jesus, though waiting His death, had a glance for Peter, and that glance subdued Satan in him.

70. For thy speech bewrayeth thee. The best MSS. omit the phrase, but it is preserved in Matt. xxvi. 73. The Galileans spoke with a rough burr, and had many other peculiarities of speech, which were regarded by the Judeans as rendering them unfit to read the Scriptures in the Judean synagogues. Amongst other things they pronounced *sh* as if it were *th*, and this may have been the peculiarity which betrayed Peter. When he said, "I know not the man," he probably said *ith* instead of *ish*.

71. Began to curse and to swear. The moral tragedy in the court below corresponding to the scene in the council-room. "Those that are shy of Christ are in a fair way to deny Him." Matthew Henry says : "We have reason to suspect the truth of that which is backed with oaths and rash imprecations. None but the devil's sayings need the devil's proofs."

72. When he thought thereon, he wept. Luke tells us that *the Lord turned and looked on Peter*, and the look as well as the warning by the cock crowing made him go out into the night *weeping bitterly* (Luke), and *weeping repeatedly* (Mark). "It was thou, O Peter, that buffetedst thy Master more than these Jews ; it was to thee that He turned the cheek from them, as to view him by whom He smarted most ; He felt thee afar off, and answered thee with a look ; such a look as was able to kill and revive at once" (Hall).

CHAP. XV. I And straightway in the morning the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council,<sup>1</sup> and bound Jesus, and carried *him* away, and delivered

<sup>1</sup> the chief priests, with the elders and scribes and the whole council, held a consultation

3. *The Roman trial*, xv. 1-14 : Matt. xxvii. 1, 2, 11-26 ; Luke xxiii. 1-25 ; John xviii. 28-xix. 4.

1. **In the morning.** The night meeting of the *Sanhedrin* was informal, and a meeting was held in the morning, to give legal sanction to what had been done. The council had no power to inflict the punishment of death. It could only state to the Roman procurator that a criminal was in its opinion worthy of death.

**And bound Jesus.** To signify that He was a criminal already condemned by their law.

**Pilate.** *Pontius Pilate*, a Roman knight, had been made the sixth Roman procurator of Judea and Samaria by the Emperor Tiberius. He succeeded Valerius Gratus in 26 A.D. His headquarters were at Cæsarea (Acts xxiii. 23) ; he had a cohort for bodyguard (Matt. xxvii. 27) ; as Roman judge he sat on a portable tribunal or *Bema* placed on a tessellated pavement (*Gab-batha*, John xix. 13) ; at the great festivals he came up to Jerusalem ; he had been a rapacious governor (Luke xiii. 1, 2), who could not afford to be accused to Cæsar, and had more than once been rebuked by the suspicious tyrants who ruled in Rome.

**To Pilate.** The order of events is somewhat obscure, but seems to have been as follows :<sup>1</sup>—

(1) After the night meeting of the *Sanhedrin*, Jesus remained in the high priest's palace, exposed to the insults of the judges and of their servants (Matt. xxvi. 67, 68 ; Mark xiv. 65 ; Luke xxii. 63-65).

(2) The *Sanhedrin* met again at daybreak. Our Lord was brought before them, and again declared that He was *the Christ* ; they formally condemned Him to death (Luke xxii. 66-71 ; Matt. xxvii. 1, 2 ; Mark xv. 1).

(3) Jesus was then led bound to Pilate, who refused to punish till he knew the crime (John xviii. 28-33 ; Matt. xxvii. 1, 2 ; Mark xv. 1 ; Luke xxiii. 1).

(4) Jesus formally accused before Pilate of *sedition*, perverting the nation, refusing tribute, calling Himself a King (Luke xxiii. 2).

(5) First conversation between Pilate and Jesus (John xviii. 33-38 ; Mark xv. 2).

(6) *Acquittal* by Pilate, whereupon the Jews bring forward further charges, including that of preaching sedition in Galilee ; Jesus silent (Matt. xxvii. 12-14 ; Mark xv. 3-5 ; Luke xxiii. 4, 5).

(7) Pilate fastens on the word Galilee, and sends the Prisoner to Herod Antipas (Luke xxiii. 6-11).

(8) Jesus sent back to Pilate. *Formal acquittal* pronounced by Pilate in the most solemn fashion (Luke xxiii. 13-15).

(9) Pilate's *first attempt at a middle course* ; will scourge but not kill (Luke xxiii. 16).

(10) Pilate's *second attempt at a middle course*. He pronounces Him a

<sup>1</sup> The portion of the narrative found in Mark is indicated by black letters.

2 *him* to Pilate. And Pilate asked him, Art thou the King of the Jews? And he, answering, said unto him, Thou sayest  
3 *it*. And the chief priests accused him of many things: but  
4 he answered nothing. And Pilate asked him again, saying, Answerest thou nothing? behold how many things they  
5 witness against thee. But Jesus yet answered nothing;<sup>1</sup> so that Pilate marvelled.

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<sup>1</sup> no more answered anything

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criminal, but hopes to release Him. The Jews accept the decision, for they know their power to persuade the mob to choose Barabbas. "Jesus or Barabbas." Message from Pilate's wife. Barabbas chosen (Matt. xxvii. 15-21; Mark xv. 11; Luke xxiii. 17-19; John xviii. 39, 40).

(11) Pilate in despair appealed to the mob; "Crucify Him!" (Matt. xxvii. 22, 23; Luke xxiii. 20-23; Mark xv. 12-14).

(12) Pilate washed his hands (Matt. xxvii. 24, 25).

(13) The sentence; Barabbas released; Jesus scourged and mocked (Matt. xxvii. 26; Mark xv. 15; Luke xxiii. 24, 25; John xix. 1-3).

(14) Pilate appealed to the Jews; *second conversation with Jesus*; further efforts of Pilate; *final sentence*; Jesus led away (John xix. 4-16).

2. And Pilate asked him. The Jews had brought Jesus bound to the palace where Pilate lived during the Passover, either Herod's palace or the Castle of Antonia. They could not enter a house where in all probability there was heaven, and so remained outside. Pilate came down to meet them. The tessellated pavement, *Gabbatha*, was laid down in front of the palace, and the judgment-seat was placed on it, and Pilate sat down as judge. He ordered the Jews to state the charge, and then seems to have taken Jesus up into the palace, and questioned Him in private. This was his *first* conversation with Jesus.

Art thou the King of the Jews? We learn from Luke that the Jews made three formal charges against Jesus, all of them different from the one on which they had previously condemned Him. "We found this fellow (1) perverting the nation; (2) forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar; (3) saying that He Himself is Christ, a King." The charge was treason against Rome, a terrible crime. Pilate with Roman directness goes straight to the third charge, which involved the other two.

Thou sayest it. The common formula of assent in Palestine and in Greece. But while Jesus declared that He was King of the Jews, He explained at length to Pilate, John tells us (John xviii. 33-37), what sort of kingdom His was. It was not a kingdom of this world, and therefore did not threaten the Empire of Rome; He did not gather soldiers, and therefore did not provoke rebellion; His kingdom was a spiritual one, founded on and manifesting truth. The defence was complete; and Pilate acknowledged it. "There are secular kingdoms, there are spiritual; neither of these trenches on the other; Pilate's rule is secular, Christ's is spiritual; both may, both must stand together. His laws are divine, yours civil; His reign is eternal, yours temporal; the glory of His end is inward, and stands in the graces of sanctification, love, peace, righteousness, joy in the Holy Ghost, yours in outward pomp, riches, magnificence; His enemies are the devil, the world,

6 Now at *that* feast he released unto them one prisoner,  
 7 whomsoever they desired.<sup>1</sup> And there was *one* named Barabbas, *which* lay bound with them that had made insurrection with him, who had committed murder in the insurrection.<sup>2</sup>  
 8 And the multitude, crying aloud, began to desire<sup>3</sup> *him to do*  
 9 as he had ever done unto them. But Pilate answered them, saying, Will ye that I release unto you the King of the Jews?  
 10 For he knew that the chief priests had delivered him for  
 11 envy. But the chief priests moved the people, that he should  
 12 rather release Barabbas unto them. And Pilate answered and said again unto them, What will ye then that I shall do *unto*

<sup>1</sup> Now at festival time he was accustomed to release to them one prisoner, whom they asked of him.

<sup>2</sup> men who in the insurrection had

<sup>3</sup> And the multitude went up and began to ask

and the flesh; yours are bodily usurpers, and external peace-breakers; His sword is the power of the word and Spirit, yours material; His rule is over the conscience, yours over bodies and lives" (Hall). Pilate acquitted Him. "*I find no fault in Him.*"

6. He released . . . whomsoever they desired. *He used to release or it was customary for him to release one prisoner whom they were wont to ask of him.* There is no trace of such a custom in Jewish documents. It has been conjectured that Herod the Great, who was fond of aping Roman manners, had imitated the Roman custom of releasing prisoners at certain festivals, and that the Roman governors had continued the practice. Luke's words, *of necessity he must release*, and John's, *ye have a custom*, seem to imply that the usage was older than Pilate's rule; on the other hand, some have argued from Mark's phrase, *as he had ever done*, that this act of clemency had been introduced by Pilate himself. The words *at that feast* should be *at feast times*.

7. Barabbas, *the one named Barabbas*, the well-known or notorious Barabbas, probably a member of one of those secret societies which sprang out of the earlier Galilean rebellions.

10. For he knew that the chief priests had delivered him for envy. John's Gospel alone tells us of the strenuous endeavours which the vacillating Pilate made to save Jesus. His Roman sense of justice pulled one way, and his fear of his gloomy master Tiberius drew him the other. Had he been an upright governor he would not have acted as he did; but he knew, and the Jews knew that he knew, that his deeds in Palestine would not bear investigation. Here as elsewhere we see how past sins are the spurs to new crimes. For Pilate's efforts to save Jesus see comments on vers. 1 and 14.

11. The chief priests moved the people. It is probable that Barabbas had been brought out and presented to the people along with Jesus. The appeal was not to the Sanhedrin, but to the populace, who by command *were gathered together* (Matt. xxvii. 17). At this juncture the messengers of Claudia Procula, Pilate's wife, according to tradition, a proselyte of the gate, came to urge Pilate, when it was too late, to release Jesus. The chief priests used the opportunity to persuade the people to "*deny the Holy One and the Just, and to desire a murderer to be granted to them*" (Acts iii. 14).

13 *him* whom ye call the King of the Jews? And they cried out  
 14 again, Crucify him. Then Pilate said unto them, Why, what  
 evil hath he done? And they cried out the more exceed-  
 15 ingly, Crucify him. And *so* Pilate, willing to content the  
 people, released Barabbas unto them, and delivered Jesus,  
 when he had scourged *him*, to be crucified.  
 16 And the soldiers led him away into the hall, called Præ-  
 17 torium;<sup>1</sup> and they called together the whole band.<sup>2</sup> And  
 they clothed him with purple, and platted a crown of thorns,

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<sup>1</sup> led him away within the court which is the Prætorium

<sup>2</sup> cohort

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13. **Crucify him.** Provoked by Pilate's question. All hope of justice was past; the mob ruled the governor. The cry was raised again and again by the crowd, mad with excitement, who pressed round the steps of the house they dared not enter for fear of becoming ceremonially unclean. Murder in their hearts and on their lips, they were yet afraid of coming within a few yards of heaven.

14. **Why, what evil hath he done?** This was the third time Pilate had expostulated with the Jews by declaring the innocence of Jesus. "It is noteworthy that he took step after step to secure the acquittal of Jesus. (1) He emphatically and publicly announced His perfect innocence; (2) he sent Him to Herod; (3) he made offer to release Him as a boon; (4) he tried to make scourging take the place of crucifixion; (5) he appealed to compassion. John shows still more clearly how, in successive stages of the trial, he sets aside—(i.) the vague general charge of being 'an evil-doer' (xviii. 30); (ii.) of being in any seditious sense 'a king' (xviii. 39); (iii.) of any guilt in His religious claims (xix. 12). He only yields at last through fear, which makes him release a man guilty of *the very crime* for which he delivers Jesus to a slave's death" (Farrar).

4. *The scourging, mocking, and crucifixion of Jesus*, xv. 15-36:  
 Matt. xxvii. 27-49; Luke xxiii. 26-45; John xix. 16-29.

15. **Delivered Jesus.** Formally handed Him over to the centurion, and to the cohort of soldiers who had charge of the execution.

**Scourged him.** The Roman scourging was a very terrible punishment. Our Lord endured it in its full severity, for the brutal soldiers mocked while they scourged. This punishment usually preceded crucifixion.

16. **Into the hall called Prætorium;** R. V., *within the court which is the Prætorium or palace.* It is the same word which the A. V. translates common hall in Matthew. It meant—(1) the general's tent in the encampment; (2) the governor's palace, which seems to be the meaning here and in Acts xxiii. 25, where Paul was commanded to be kept in Herod's prætorium; (3) the barracks of the Prætorian guard at Rome; and (4) the Prætorian guard, in which sense it is used in Phil. i. 13 (R. V.), "*So that my bonds became manifest in Christ throughout the whole Prætorian guard or in the whole Prætorium.*"

17. **With purple.** The word is often used to denote any brilliant colour. Matthew more precisely says, "*A scarlet or crimson robe.*" The soldiers mocked our Lord by dressing Him in imitation of the emperor, an old

18 and put it about his *head*,<sup>1</sup> and began to salute him, Hail,  
 19 King of the Jews! And they smote him on the head with a  
 reed, and did spit upon him, and, bowing *their* knees, wor-  
 20 shipped him. And when they had mocked him, they took  
 off the purple from him, and put his own clothes on him, and  
 led him out to crucify him.

21 And they compel one Simon a Cyrenian, who passed by,

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<sup>1</sup> about him

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military cloak for the purple, a reed for the sceptre, a crown of thorns for the laurel chaplet.

**A crown of thorns.** The word used is so vague that it is impossible to tell what kind of thorns were used. Most writers have thought that the plant was the thorny *nâbk* (*Zizyphus Spina Christi*), which has flexible branches, and ivy-shaped glossy dark green leaves, with large and sharp thorns. It still grows in dwarf bushes outside the walls of Jerusalem; it was most fit for the purpose intended, and it grew in quantities near at hand.

**19. And they smote him on the head.** The words used imply a continual repetition of the acts. The whole cohort first indulged in rough horse-play, and then in acts of brutal cruelty. And He who suffered all these indignities was God, and He suffered for us. "Those who pretend subjection to Christ, but at the same time give themselves up to the service of the world and the flesh, do, in effect, the same that they did, who bowed the knee to Him in mockery, and abused Him, with Hail, King of the Jews" (Matt. Henry).

**20. Led him out to crucify him.** Malefactors were executed without the gate, and Jesus was led forth; but from what place, and by what road, and to what spot, are all matters of conjecture. An old tradition points to a path which has been called the *Via Dolorosa*, the way of pain and sorrow; if the tradition is correct, it is implied also that Pilate was living in the Castle of Antonia, and that Golgotha was where the Church of the Holy Sepulchre stands at present. If the trial was in Herod's palace, the procession could not have gone along that street, and Calvary was probably to the north and not to the west of the city. (See Map, p. 184.)

**21. They compel.** The word was taken over from the Persian into Greek, to denote the compulsory service which a despotic government required at the hands of its subjects. The Romans were accustomed to compel the natives of conquered countries to do various kinds of forced labour without payment, to impress them or their slaves or their beasts of burden. The cohort "impressed" Simon.

**Simon a Cyrenian.** Cyrene was a flourishing city in North Africa, not far from the modern Tripoli. It contained a large colony of Jews, who had settled there, as in other Egyptian cities, to avoid the persecutions of the kings of Syria. The Cyrenians had a synagogue in Jerusalem (Acts vi. 9). Simon was coming from the country, probably ignorant of all that had happened, and he was impressed to bear the cross, which our Lord was too weak to carry. The narrative of Mark makes it quite plain that the meeting with Simon was accidental, and that his seizure was an act of wanton tyranny by the Roman cohort; but it is evident, too, that he became a Christian well known in the Apostolic Church. Many, like Simon, when they meet Christ,

coming out of the country, the father of Alexander and  
 22 Rufus, to bear his cross.<sup>1</sup> And they bring him unto the place  
 Golgotha, which is, being interpreted, The place of a skull.  
 23 And they give him to drink wine mingled with myrrh: but  
 24 he received it not. And when they had crucified him, they  
 parted his garments, casting lots upon them, what every man  
 25 should take. And it was the third hour, and they crucified

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<sup>1</sup> And they compel one passing by, Simon a Cyrenian, coming from the country, to go *with them*, that he might bear his cross.

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would fain pass by Him; but they are caught and made to bear His cross for some short time, and become His for ever.

**The father of Alexander and Rufus;** one of Mark's additions. The men are mentioned in such a way that they must have been well known in the Church. Rufus is probably the Christian mentioned by Paul in Rom. xvi. 13, whose mother had treated him with great kindness. If so, Simon the Cyrenian must have had some connection with Antioch as well as with Rome and Jerusalem. The Cyrenian Jews were prominent on the day of Pentecost (Acts ii. 10); they disputed with Stephen (Acts vi. 9); and some of them who became Christians were active preachers of the gospel and acted as missionaries to Antioch (Acts xi. 20).

**To bear his cross.** It was customary to compel those who were condemned to crucifixion to carry on their shoulders to the place of crucifixion two pieces of wood out of which the cross was formed. Jesus did so carry his cross (John xix. 17); but he had had no sleep during the previous night,—spent partly in the agony in Gethsemane, partly at the Jewish examination and trial,—and He may have fallen in His weakness; and then Simon was seized to bear the wood for the cross.

**22. Unto the place Golgotha . . . The place of a skull.** The name is supposed to mean that the place was a low rounded eminence, skull-shaped. Calvary, the word found in Luke, is the Latin or Vulgate translation of Golgotha. The site cannot be identified: all that can be known is, that it was near Jerusalem (John xix. 20), but outside the walls; that it was near a public road where men were passing to and fro (Matt. xxvii. 39); and that was near to a garden (John xix. 41). There is nothing to warrant us in calling it a hill. (See Map, p. 184.)

**23. Mingled with myrrh.** A drink mercifully offered to those about to be crucified, *which produced stupefaction*. It is said that some of the ladies of Jerusalem belonged to a guild or society for the purpose of preparing this anodyne for criminals who might be punished by this horribly cruel death. Jesus refused to drink. He was suffering for our sins, and He bore the full burden.

**24. They parted his garments.** For a more detailed account, see John xix. 23, 24. Matthew quotes Ps. xxii. 18.

**25. The third hour, i.e. nine o'clock.** John's statement that Jesus was still in the presence of Pilate at the sixth hour, or at twelve o'clock (xix. 14), has caused some difficulty. The common explanation is that he used another mode of calculating time; but this is not very satisfactory. Canon Farrar thinks that the hour mentioned in John is due to an error which might easily

26 him. And the superscription of his accusation was written  
 27 over, THE KING OF THE JEWS. And with him they  
 crucify two thieves;<sup>1</sup> the one on his right hand, and the  
 28 other on his left. And the scripture was fulfilled, which  
 29 saith, And he was numbered with the transgressors.<sup>2</sup> And

<sup>1</sup> robbers or bandits<sup>2</sup> omit verse 28

creep into the text, and that Ι' (third) was altered by transcribers into ς' (sixth). When the Jewish day was divided into hours, day meant daylight. The day contained twelve hours, and the length of the hour varied with the amount of daylight to be divided; and only one hour, that of noon, was always the same, and corresponded to our hour of sixty minutes. The Jewish first hour began at sunrise, and corresponded with our six o'clock only during the equinoxes. The Jewish sixth hour always ended at our twelve noon.

26. **The superscription of his accusation.** The crime was usually written on a white tablet, which, in the procession to the place of execution, was hung round the neck of the criminal, and was at the execution nailed to the top of the cross.

Was written over, that is, was nailed to the cross over Jesus' head. From this the shape of the cross on which our Lord suffered has been inferred. Three different crosses were in use—(1) the *crux decussata*, or St. Andrew's cross (X); (2) the *crux commissa* (T), St. Anthony's cross; and (3) the *crux immissa*, or ordinary Roman cross (†). The third alone had space for the superscription.

**The King of the Jews.** The superscription was written in three languages, and this would partly account for the various forms recorded in the four Evangelists—(1) *This is Jesus, the King of the Jews* (Matt. xxvii. 37); (2) *The King of the Jews* (Mark xv. 26); (3) *This is the King of the Jews* (Luke xxiii. 38); (4) *Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews* (John xix. 19).

ישו הנצרי מלך היהודים	JOHN.
ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων	MARK.
Rex Judæorum hic est	LUKE.

OR

ישו הנצרי מלך היהודים	JOHN.
Οὗτός ἐστιν Ἰησοῦς ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων	LUKE.
Rex Judæorum	MARK.

27. **Two thieves;** lit. *brigands*, probably companions of Barabbas.

28. **And the scripture.** This verse is not found in the best MSS., and was probably a marginal note afterwards incorporated in the text. The reference is to Isa. liii. 12, and was quoted by our Lord as a prophecy that would be fulfilled in Him (Luke xxii. 37).



- they that passed by railed on him, wagging their heads, and saying, Ah, thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it  
30 in three days, save thyself, and come down from the cross.  
31 Likewise also the chief priests, mocking, said among themselves, with the scribes,<sup>1</sup> He saved others; himself he cannot save.<sup>2</sup>  
32 Let Christ<sup>3</sup> the King of Israel descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe. And they that were crucified with him reviled him.<sup>4</sup>  
33 And when the sixth hour was come, there was darkness  
34 over the whole land until the ninth hour. And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? And some of them that stood

<sup>1</sup> mocking him among themselves with the scribes, said

<sup>2</sup> can he not save himself

<sup>3</sup> the Christ

<sup>4</sup> reproached him

29. **They that passed by railed on him.** The mockery to which our Lord was exposed came from four classes of persons:—

(1) The passers-by who had come from the city, who were told of the popular accusation, and who derided Him as the pretended destroyer of their temple.

(2) The chief priests, who referred to His many challenges to them in the signs or miracles which He had done.

(3) The soldiers (Luke xxiii. 36), who had heard that He called Himself a king; and

(4) The bandits crucified along with Him, who derided Him for not being able to save them and Himself.

31. **Himself he cannot save.** The sneer given in mockery was nevertheless true. He had come into the world to save others. It had been His chief temptation to save Himself, but He could not save Himself and finish the work His Father had given Him to do. He sacrificed Himself.

32. **Christ the King of Israel.** Jesus had confessed before the Sanhedrin that He was *the Christ*, before Pilate that He was a King; His revilers put the two claims together.

33. **Sixth hour . . . until the ninth hour, i.e.** from twelve till three o'clock. Just as the supernatural darkness veiled the crucified Christ from the people, so the Gospel narratives tell us nothing of our Lord's agonies during these three hours of mysterious gloom. "The sun set over Christ and rose for me."

34. **The ninth hour, that is, about the time of the evening sacrifice.**

**My God, My God.** This is the only one of the *seven words from the cross* that Mark gives. They were:—

(1) *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do* (Luke xxiii. 34); of the soldiers as they were nailing Him to the cross.

(2) *Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise* (Luke xxiii. 43); to the penitent thief.

(3) *Woman, behold thy son! . . . Behold thy mother* (John xix. 26, 27); to Mary and John.

36 by, when they heard *it*, said, Behold, he calleth Elias.<sup>1</sup> And one ran and filled a sponge full of vinegar, and put *it* on a reed, and gave him to drink, saying, Let alone; let us see 37 whether Elias<sup>1</sup> will come to take him down. And Jesus 38 cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost. And the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the

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<sup>1</sup> Elijah

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(4) *My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?* (Matt. xxvii. 46; Mark xv. 34).

(5) *I thirst* (John xix. 28).

(6) *It is finished* (John xix. 30).

(7) *Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit* (Luke xxiii. 46). The first three were for others; the next two describe His own sufferings—(1) mentally, (2) bodily; in the last two Jesus triumphantly closes His mission and surrenders Himself to His Father, having finished the work given Him to do. Three are recorded by Luke only, and three by John only.

35. Behold, he calleth Elias, or *Elijah*. Many commentators believe that these words were spoken in mockery; if so, the irony is graver than in the earlier sneers. The darkness had awed all men; the coming of Elijah was expected; moreover he, next to Moses, was *the* prophet of the Old Testament to which our Lord had constantly appealed. It is as if they said, "He still appeals to the Old Testament, let us see whether it will yet save Him."

*In his description of the crucifixion Mark has omitted several incidents recorded by Luke—(1) the great company of people and of women, "daughters of Jerusalem," who followed Jesus to the place of execution; (2) our Lord's tender address to the women who wept to see Him suffer; (3) His last warning of the tribulations coming on Jerusalem; (4) the fact that the two malefactors were led along with Him; and (5) the incident of the penitent thief.*

5. *The death*, xv. 37-41: Matt. xxvii. 50-56; Luke xxiii. 45-49; John xix. 31-37.

37. Loud voice. This is noted by all the Evangelists. What Jesus said was the last of the *seven* words (note on p. 34; Ps. xxxi. 5); or else an inarticulate cry.

Gave up the ghost. Ghost is spirit, and the phrase is *surrendered His spirit*. All the Evangelists prefer some expression like this to the simpler one *died*. They seem to imply that the act was voluntary, and they connect Jesus' surrender of life with His last cry.

38. The veil of the temple was rent in twain. The veil which separated the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies. The fact must have been made known by the priests, of whom "a great company were obedient to the faith" after Pentecost (Acts vi. 7). The heavy *parocheth*, splendid with embroidery, always hung between men's eyes and the Holy of Holies where God dwelt, to show that God could not be approached because of man's sin. But when sin was got rid of by the death of Christ, the Holiest could be entered "by a new and living way," and God made this plain by the rent veil of the temple (compare Heb. x. 19, 20).

- 39 bottom. And when the centurion, which stood over against him, saw that he so cried out, and<sup>1</sup> gave up the ghost, he  
 40 said, Truly this man was the Son of God. There were also women looking on afar off: among whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the less and of  
 41 Joses, and Salome; (who also, when he was in Galilee, followed him, and ministered unto him;) and many other women which came up with him unto Jerusalem.  
 42 And now when even was come, because it was the pre-  
 43 paration, that is, the day before the sabbath, Joseph of Arimathea, an honourable counsellor,<sup>2</sup> which also waited for

<sup>1</sup> *omit* cried out, and<sup>2</sup> a councillor of honourable estate

39. **The centurion** in command of the soldiers who had charge of the execution.

**Truly this man was the Son of God.** The better translation is probably *was a Son of God*. Luke relates that the centurion said, "Truly this was a righteous man." Farrar conjectures that the sentence recorded by Luke was uttered before the earthquake mentioned by Matthew, and the sentence recorded by Mark and Matthew after that awe-inspiring event. The words do not necessarily mean a recognition of the divinity of Jesus, but they may mean that; at all events, they bring the centurion very near the kingdom of God. What power there was in the dying Saviour, dying the most disgraceful death known, may be seen in this, that in His last agonies He drew to acknowledge Him a Jewish bandit and a Roman officer. He who in His lifetime reconciled the publican and the zealot, in His death brought together the Jewish patriotic freebooter, and the centurion whose business it was to hunt down all such bandits as one would beasts of prey.

40. **There were also women.** Not the "daughters of Jerusalem" mentioned by Luke (xxiii. 28), but mostly Galileans. Among them were—

(1) **Mary Magdalene** or Mary of Magdala, whom the Lord had cured of an aggravated form of demoniacal possession. She is not to be identified with the nameless "sinner" who anointed Jesus' feet in the house of Simon the Pharisee (Luke vii. 36-50).

(2) **Mary the mother of James the less.** She was the *Mary of Clopas* of John xix. 25; Matt. xxvii. 56. *James the little*, to distinguish him from the son of Salome and Zebedee.

(3) **Salome**, the mother of James and John (Matt. xxvii. 56).

(4) Other women who had come from Galilee to Jerusalem (Luke xxiii. 49). Among them were Mary the Virgin, the mother of Jesus (John xix. 25).

*Mark omits to mention several incidents—*(1) *the earthquake* (Matt. xxvii. 51); (2) *the rising of the saints* (Matt. xxvii. 52); (3) *the fact that all Jesus' acquaintance stood round and were in sorrow* (Luke); (4) *the piercing of Jesus' side, and breaking the malefactors' legs* (John).

6. **The burial**, 42-47: Matt. xxvii. 57-61; Luke xxiii. 50-56;

John xix. 38-42.

43. **Joseph of Arimathea.** It is difficult to identify this place. Some make it Ramathaim-zophim of Mount Ephraim, where Samuel was born

the kingdom of God,<sup>1</sup> came, and went in boldly unto Pilate,  
 44 and craved the body of Jesus. And Pilate marvelled if he  
 were already dead: and, calling *unto him* the centurion, he  
 45 asked him whether he had been any while dead. And when  
 he knew *it* of the centurion, he gave the body to Joseph.<sup>2</sup>  
 46 And he bought fine linen,<sup>3</sup> and took him down, and wrapped<sup>4</sup>  
 him in the linen, and laid him in a sepulchre which was  
 hewn out of a rock, and rolled a stone unto the door of the  
 47 sepulchre. And Mary Magdalene and Mary *the mother* of  
 Josès beheld where he was laid.

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<sup>1</sup> who also himself was looking for the kingdom of God

<sup>2</sup> And when he learned it of the centurion, he granted the body to Joseph.

<sup>3</sup> a linen cloth *or* *sindôn*

<sup>4</sup> wound

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(1 Sam. i. 1); others, Ramah in Benjamin (Matt. ii. 18). Joseph was a member of the Sanhedrin, and a rich man (Matt. xxvii. 57); he either had not been at the meeting of the Sanhedrin which condemned Jesus, or had protested against it. He "had not consented to the deed or counsel" (Luke xxiii. 51) which condemned Jesus. Like Nicodemus, who was also a member of the Sanhedrin, he had been a secret disciple.

**Craved the body of Jesus.** According to Roman practice, the bodies of those crucified remained on the cross till they rotted away, but a concession was made in favour of the Jews, whose law forbade a man hanging on a tree all night (Deut. xxi. 23). Joseph's request, however, in the circumstances, was a bold one. Pilate granted it readily, in accordance with his previous anxiety to release Jesus. Had Joseph not got leave from Pilate, the body of Jesus would have been put in a burying-place set apart by the Sanhedrin to receive criminals. The peculiar circumstances attending our Lord's death, notably the loud cry, and the rush of blood and water from the great gash made by the soldier's spear, the blade of which was an hand-breadth wide, have made many trustworthy authorities suppose that Jesus died of an actual rupture of the heart. See Hanna's *Last Day of Our Lord's Passion*.

44. **Pilate marvelled**, that Jesus was so soon dead. Those who suffered crucifixion often lingered for days on the cross. Jesus had been exhausted by the agony in the garden, and by the subsequent events; He was bearing the world's sins as well as bodily pains.

46. **Fine linen**, a *sindôn* or sheet of Indian muslin, a *linen sheet or cloth*. John tells us that Nicodemus was with Joseph, and that they brought also "a mixture of myrrh and aloes" in which to wrap the body (John xix. 39-41).

**In a sepulchre.** It was in a garden near Golgotha (John xix. 41), was hewn out of a rock, probably out of the face of the rock near the ground, and was Joseph's *own* sepulchre, which had never been used before. It was therefore easy to prove that the body which came out of it was the one which had been put in.

47. **Beheld where he was laid.** They followed to the sepulchre (Luke xxiii. 55), and during the burial "sat over against the tomb" (Matt. xxvii. 61).

CHAP. XVI. 1 And when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the *mother* of James, and Salome, had bought  
2 sweet spices, that they might come and anoint him. And

# VII.—THE JEWISH SABBATH, xvi. 1.

## *The rest of Jesus in the tomb, 1.*

1. When the Sabbath was past. In Jewish reckoning of days, every part of a day is counted. Jesus remained in the tomb on Friday night, Saturday, and Saturday night—three days.

# V.—THE RESURRECTION AND ASCENSION, xvi. 1-20.

1. *The visit of the Maries and of Salome*, xvi. 1-3: Matt. xxviii. 1; Luke xxiv. 1; John xx. 1.

1. When the Sabbath was past. The order of events seems to have been—

(1) Soon after our Lord's death the chief priests begged that the bodies be removed from the cross; the two malefactors were killed; Jesus was found to be dead (John xix. 31-37).

(2) Joseph is allowed by Pilate to take away and bury the body of Jesus, Nicodemus aiding him (Matt. xxvii. 57-60; Mark xv. 42-46; Luke xxiii. 50-54; John xix. 38-42).

(3) Certain women follow the body to the tomb, see where He was laid, and buy spices to anoint Him when the Sabbath is over (Luke xxiii. 55-56; Matt. xxvii. 61; Mark xv. 47).

(4) During the Sabbath the *Sanhedrin* are allowed to seal up the sepulchre, and to place a guard (Matt. xxvii. 62-66).

(5) As the first day began to dawn there was an earthquake; an angel descended; the soldiers fled (Matt. xxviii. 2-4).

(6) Immediately after came Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James (Matt., Mark), Salome (Mark), and Joanna (Luke) to the tomb (Matt. xxviii. 1; Mark xvi. 1; Luke xxiv. 1-10).

(7) When they see the stone rolled away, Mary Magdalene runs back to tell Peter and John, the others enter and see the angel (John xx. 1, 2; Mark xvi. 2-8; Luke xxiv. 2-8; Matt. xxviii. 5-8).

(8) Peter and John come with Mary (John xx. 3-10; Luke xxiv. 12, 24), they enter the sepulchre, and John believes.

(9) Mary lingers and sees the angels, then Jesus (John xx. 11-18; Mark xvi. 9-11; Matt. xxviii. 9, 10; Luke xxiv. 9-11).

**Mary Magdalene.** The devout women who came to the sepulchre were Mary Magdalene; Mary the wife of Clopas; Salome, wife of Zebedee (Mark); Joanna, wife of Chuza, chamberlain to Herod Antipas; and other women (Luke).

**Bought sweet spices.** They had watched the place of burial on Friday (Mark xv. 47), and on the same evening, or on Saturday after sunset, they had bought spices (Luke xxiv. 1), not to embalm, for that was the work of physicians, and embalming was not commonly practised among the Jews, but to anoint the body as Mary of Bethany had done before the crucifixion (Mark xiv. 2-9; John xii. 2, 3).

very early in the morning, the first *day* of the week, they came  
 3 unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun.<sup>1</sup> And they said  
 among themselves,<sup>2</sup> Who shall roll us away the stone from  
 4 the door of the sepulchre? And when they looked, they  
 saw<sup>3</sup> that the stone was rolled away: for it was very great.  
 5 And entering into the sepulchre, they saw a young man  
 sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment;

<sup>1</sup> when the sun was risen

<sup>2</sup> And they kept saying among themselves

<sup>3</sup> And looking up they see

2. *Very early in the morning . . . at the rising of the sun, or when the sun had risen.* Luke (xxiv. 1), describing when they left the house, says, *Very early in the morning, or at deep dawn*, and John, *While it was yet dark* (xx. 1); Matthew and Mark, noting when they reached the tomb, say, *When the sun had risen*. There is scarcely any twilight in Palestine. It was the morning of the first day of the week, thenceforth to be called the Lord's day (Rev. i. 10).

3. *They said among themselves.* They kept saying in whispers to each other as they stole out of Jerusalem.

*Who shall roll us away the stone.* They had evidently heard nothing of the guard of Roman soldiers which the chief priests, who in their hearts had rightly enough interpreted the meaning of Christ's reference to the temple of His body, however they chose to mislead the people about it, had asked from Pilate to keep watch over the sepulchre (Matt. xxvii. 62-66). Their only anxiety was lest the stone should be too heavy for them to turn.

2. *The resurrection*, xvi. 4-8: Matt. xxviii. 1-8; Luke xxiv. 1-12; John xx. 1-10.

4. *When they looked, they saw, or looking up, they see.* These words of Mark seem to imply that the tomb was somewhat raised above the ground, and John's expression that the stone was *lifted up* (*ἡρμήνεν*) seems to say that the entrance was horizontal and not vertical. But these are mere conjectures.

*For it was very great.* Tombs of rich men like Joseph were frequently spacious rock-hewn chambers with an outer corridor or vestibule, which was separated from the inner space by a large stone (*Gólal*), which either moved on a pivot or was simply rolled against the rock aperture or door. The stone which closed Jesus' tomb had been rolled against the door by Joseph and Nicodemus. The stone was found rolled away, and the entrance into the tomb was open.

5. *A young man sitting . . . in a long white garment.* The accounts of the vision of the angels are various. *A young man sitting on the right side clothed in a long white garment*, evidently the first object seen (Mark); *two men standing by them in glistering garments*, who were not at first seen, but flashed on them suddenly as they stood in perplexity seeing the empty tomb (Luke); one angel who had rolled back the stone and sat upon it, affrighting the keepers, whose face glanced as the lightning, and whose raiment was white as snow (Matthew); the tomb empty at first when the women came, still empty when Peter and John entered, then *two angels sitting one at the head and one at the feet where the body of Jesus had lain*, appeared to Mary Magdalene on her second visit (John).

- 6 and they were affrighted.<sup>1</sup> And he saith unto them, Be not affrighted : <sup>1</sup> ye seek Jesus of Nazareth,<sup>2</sup> which was crucified : he is risen ; he is not here : behold the place where they laid  
 7 him. But go your way, tell his disciples and Peter that he goeth before you into Galilee : there shall ye see him, as he  
 8 said unto you. And they went out quickly, and fled from the sepulchre ; for they trembled and were amazed ;<sup>3</sup> neither said they any thing to any *man* ; for they were afraid.  
 9 Now when *Jesus* was risen early the first *day* of the week,

<sup>1</sup> amazed<sup>2</sup> the Nazarene<sup>3</sup> from trembling and ecstasy, *or* a trance had come upon them

“Cold discrepancy-mongers, do ye not then see that the Evangelists do not count the angels? . . . There were not only two angels, there were millions of them. They appeared not always one and the same, not always the same two ; sometimes this one appeared, sometimes that ; sometimes in this place, sometimes in that ; sometimes alone, sometimes in company ; sometimes they said this, sometimes they said that” (Lessing, quoted by Farrar).

6. **Be not affrighted, or amazed.** In Matthew, “Fear not *ye*.” Perhaps the soldiers had not yet found courage enough to go away, and there was a contrast between them and the women. “*Ye*, His friends, have no need to fear.”

**He is risen.** No one saw Jesus rise. The angels sent to announce the fact stated it, the empty sepulchre witnessed it, and the subsequent appearances of Jesus confirmed it to the apostles.

7. **And Peter.** A special message to Peter, who had denied his Master, and in his repentance might fancy himself outside the circle of disciples. Christ does not break the bruised reed.

**That he goeth before you, leadeth you as a shepherd.** The message of the angels was a renewal of the promise of Jesus at the Last Supper (Mark xiv. 28). Christ never forgets His appointments.

The Last Supper was to be the framework of a sacrifice without a victim, the empty space showing that the Lamb which had been slain was the living risen Saviour, who in spirit and power is always present in the midst of His people, and especially at His Communion Table. The empty tomb, with the promise that the Saviour was still near them to shepherd them, was another sign that He had but exchanged His bodily presence, limited by time and constrained by space, for a spiritual presence which knows no such confinements.

8. **They were afraid.** For the first vision of the glory often brings a holy fear. They were in a tumult of commotion. Trembling and ecstasy had seized them. They were in a trance.

### 3. *Appearances after the resurrection.*

(1) *To Mary Magdalene, 9-11 : John xx. 11-18.*

9. **Now when Jesus was risen.** Vers. 9-20 are omitted in a large number of MSS., and the question arises, Are they part of the original and authentic Gospel of Mark?

he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had  
 10 cast seven devils. *And* she went and told them that had  
 11 been with him, as they mourned and wept. And they, when  
 they had heard that he was alive, and had been seen of her,  
 believed not.

The critical facts are as follows :—(1) The Gospel of Mark closes very abruptly at the end of the 8th verse with the words *φοβεῦντο γάρ* (for they were afraid), in the Sinaitic and Vatican MSS., the two oldest MSS., in one MS. of the old Latin version, and in several MSS. of less importance ; while vers. 9–20 are found in the Alexandrian MS., in the *Codex Ephraemi Syri Rescriptus*, and in the *Codex Bezae*, with a very large majority of the minor MSS., and in all the most important ancient versions. (2) Jerome, following Eusebius, has assured us that they did not belong to Mark's Gospel in many important MSS. of his day ; on the other hand, they are acknowledged as genuine by Irenæus, Hippolytus, and Augustine.

Critical opinion is much divided. Tischendorf, Alford, and Weiss do not believe that these verses formed part of the original Gospel of Mark ; Scrivener accepts them as part of the original Gospel ; Tregelles has no decided opinion ; Westcott and Hort look on them as an early supplement, which was added to complete the mutilated or unfinished Gospel. Most critics are of opinion that if these verses are not part of the original Gospel, there must have been some other conclusion which has been lost ; the abrupt *φοβεῦντο γάρ* could never have been the end, they say. Abbott thinks that these words were the original conclusion, and that Mark closed his Gospel abruptly with them, because he clung to the common oral tradition, and preferred to end where it ended.

**The first day of the week.** “A singular and significant testimony to the truth of the resurrection is afforded by the change in the Sabbath day. It was not changed by any express command in the New Testament, but by the universal consent of the Church” (Abbott).

**To Mary Magdalene.** Those saw Jesus first who loved Him most.

**11. Believed not.** Mark rings the changes on these two words. It is characteristic of his whole Gospel to present striking changes of mood of mind owing to the presentation of the message of the kingdom. He dwells on the unbelief to make brighter the faith which was afterwards kindled, and the joy with which the disciples received the knowledge that the Lord was risen indeed. We can contrast this determined refusal to believe, this hardness or dulness of apprehension until the truth forced itself on their minds, with the tenacity with which they clung to their faith, and with the unwearied assiduity with which they preached the resurrection of Jesus, making it the keystone of apostolic theology. The fact of the resurrection was to all the apostles, as well as to Paul, the warrant of Jesus' Messiahship. He had risen, and therefore He was the Sent of God, and what He had told them He had got from the Father. When the apostles went forth to preach they invariably began with the resurrection. Jesus had risen, and therefore had proved Himself to be what He had said while He was yet alive, the Son of God and the Saviour of the world. His rising again was also a proof that His death was no mere martyrdom, but an evidence that it was a death for His people, bringing forgiveness of sin (1 Cor. xv. 17). It was a sign that His disciples may die unto



- 12 And after that he appeared<sup>1</sup> in another form unto two of  
 13 them, as they walked, and went into the country.<sup>2</sup> And  
 they went and told *it* unto the residue: neither believed they  
 them.  
 14 Afterward he appeared<sup>3</sup> unto the eleven as they sat at  
 meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness  
 of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him

<sup>1</sup> And after these things he was manifested<sup>2</sup> on their way into the country<sup>3</sup> was manifested

sin, and live a new life of holiness (Gal. ii. 20, 21). It was a pledge that as Jesus rose our bodies will rise too, and that there is an eternal life in a realm which knows neither death nor parting for all His people (1 Cor. xv.). The resurrection was no restoration to an old life, but foreshadowed a new mode of being in the revelation of a new life.

(2) *To two disciples, 12, 13.*

12. **In another form.** In His glorified Body, which they did not at first recognize. This was the appearance on the road to Emmaus; one of the disciples was Cleophas (Luke xxiv. 13-35).

13. **They believed not.** They had known the Lord in the breaking of bread (Luke xxiv. 35), and had hastened with the news to Jerusalem; there they met the Eleven, who were also able to greet them with the news that the *Lord had risen and had appeared to Simon* (Luke xxiv. 34). Yet Mark says that the *residue* believed not, and that *afterwards* the Lord upbraided the Eleven with their hardness of heart and slowness to believe. There is no necessary discrepancy. They believed, and they did not believe. At one time it seemed as if the Lord was certainly risen; then they fell back into their old doubts; then they believed not for joy. They went through a thousand tumultuous changes of mind before they settled down to earnest steady faith.

(3) *To the Eleven, xvi. 14.*

14. **Appeared unto the eleven . . . as they sat at meat.** The words denote a sudden and therefore startling appearance.

**Which had seen him.** The recorded appearances of our Lord (for there seem to have been many unrecorded, Acts i. 3) are as follows:—

- (1) To Mary Magdalene (John xx. 11-18; Mark xvi. 9-11).
- (2) To the other women who went to the sepulchre (Matt. xxviii. 9).
- (3) To Peter (Luke xxiv. 34; 1 Cor. xv. 5).
- (4) To the two on the road to Emmaus (Luke xxiv. 13-35; Mark xvi. 12).
- (5) To the *Eleven* in the evening, Thomas being absent (John xx. 19-24). *These were all on the day of the resurrection.*
- (6) To the "*Eleven*," Thomas being present, *one week later* (John xx. 25-29; Mark xvi. 14-18).
- (7) To seven apostles by the Sea of Galilee (John xxi. 1-24).
- (8) To 500 disciples on a hill in Galilee (Matt. xxviii. 16-20; 1 Cor. xv. 6).
- (9) To James (1 Cor. xv. 7).

15 after he was risen. And he said unto them, Go ye into all  
 16 the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.<sup>1</sup> He  
 that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that  
 17 believeth not shall be damned.<sup>2</sup> And these signs shall  
 follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out  
 18 devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up

---

<sup>1</sup> to the whole creation

<sup>2</sup> condemned

---

(10) To the apostles at Jerusalem (Acts i. 3-5; 1 Cor. xv. 7).

(11) Near Bethany at the ascension (Acts i. 6-11; Mark xvi. 19; Luke xxiv. 50, 51).

#### 4. *The last charge and the ascension, 15-19.*

15. **Go ye into all the world.** The Church of Christ must be a missionary Church, and this sentence of Jesus gives it its marching orders. Whenever "soul-hunger" ceases to animate the Church, it cannot fail to become lifeless and useless.

**Preach the gospel to every creature;** better, *to the whole creation*, until the kingdoms of the world become the kingdoms of God and of His Christ. The phrase in Matthew (xxviii. 19) is *teach*, or rather *make disciples of all nations*.

16. **He that believeth and is baptized.** Faith and the outward sign and seal of faith are required here by Jesus, and were insisted on by His apostles. Matthew records that He commanded His apostles *to make disciples of and to baptize all nations in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*. It is probable that baptism was in the Jewish Church before the Advent of Christ, and that proselytes were baptized in the name of God: though the subject is involved in considerable obscurity. At all events John baptized, preaching a baptism of repentance and remission of sins. Jesus adopted the rite, made it take the place of circumcision, gave it a new, profound meaning, and used the names of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost in the formula. It is to be noticed that, in the cases of baptism recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, converts were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus (Acts ii. 38, viii. 16, x. 48, xix. 5); but this does not warrant us declaring that the names of the Father and of the Holy Ghost were omitted from the formula.

**Shall be saved.** This is not the place to discuss the doctrine of baptismal efficacy; but it may be pointed out that the passage does not read, *he that is not baptized shall be condemned*. It is not the want of baptism, but the contempt of it that condemns.

**Shall be damned;** better, *condemned*; for the Greek has not the idea of the irrevocable attached to it which belongs to the English word: "He who wilfully rejects the gospel when offered to him shall have no share in its saving mercies, but be left to the condemnation due to his sins."

17. **And these signs shall follow them that believe.** "Jesus does not mean that each of these signs shall manifest itself with every believer, but this miracle with one and that with another" (Meyer).

**In my name shall they cast out devils.** Acts viii. 7, xvi. 18, xix. 15, 16.

**Speak with new tongues.** This is the only clear promise of the gift which

serpents ; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them ; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.

- 19 So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on<sup>1</sup> the right hand of God.  
20 And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with *them*, and confirming the word with signs following.<sup>2</sup> Amen.

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<sup>1</sup> sat down at

<sup>2</sup> by the signs that followed

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came at Pentecost, Acts ii. 1-12. Comp. also x. 46, xix. 6 ; 1 Cor. xii. 10, xiv. 4-26.

18. *They shall take up serpents.* This was a renewal of an earlier promise. Comp. Luke x. 19 : *power over serpents and scorpions*. The only recorded instance is the case of Paul at Melita (Acts xxviii. 1-6).

*If they drink any deadly thing.* Tradition tells us about a cup of hemlock offered to John and to Justus Barsabas, which they drank and suffered no harm.

*They shall lay hands on the sick.* Comp. Acts iii. 7, xxviii. 8.

19. *He was received up into heaven.* Neither Matthew nor John record the Ascension, but both assume that it took place. Matthew (xxiv. 30) tells how the Son of man shall come in the clouds of heaven ; and John (xx. 17) records how Jesus told Mary Magdalene to say to His brethren, *I ascend unto My Father and your Father, to My God and your God*. The Ascension is described with more detail by Luke in his Gospel (xxiv. 50-53), and in the Acts of the Apostles (i. 6-11). The Ascension of Jesus is the promise of our after-ascension.

#### 5. *Sitting at the right hand of God, 19, 20.*

19. *Sat on the right hand of God.* Given by Mark only ; but see Acts vii. 55, 56. Jesus has taken up in His body redeemed humanity, and has placed it in heaven at God's right hand.

20. *And they, the apostles.*

*Preached everywhere.* Before Mark's Gospel was written, the gospel had been preached from Spain in the west to Babylon in the east.

*With signs following.* Where the spiritually blind are enlightened, the spiritually dead quickened, the spiritually deaf and dumb made to hear devoutly and to speak piously, the spiritually lame made to walk in the paths of righteousness and to be active in every good work, and the spiritually leprous are cleansed from sins,—there the Lord is confirming the word with signs following ; for these are signs and wonders greater than physical changes, the greater deeds that our Lord promised that His disciples would perform. These signs still follow the preaching of the word ; and the age of miracles of grace is not past, nor shall it ever pass while time lasts.

The spread of the gospel according to the promise of Christ, and what remains yet to do, may be seen in the following tables, compiled from the works of the most careful statist :—

## PROGRESS OF CHRISTIANITY.

First century, . . . . .	500,000	Tenth century, . . . . .	50,000,000
Second „ . . . . .	2,000,000	Eleventh „ . . . . .	70,000,000
Third „ . . . . .	5,000,000	Twelfth „ . . . . .	80,000,000
Fourth „ . . . . .	10,000,000	Thirteenth „ . . . . .	75,000,000
Fifth „ . . . . .	15,000,000	Fourteenth „ . . . . .	80,000,000
Sixth „ . . . . .	20,000,000	Fifteenth „ . . . . .	100,000,000
Seventh „ . . . . .	24,000,000	Sixteenth „ . . . . .	125,000,000
Eighth „ . . . . .	30,000,000	Seventeenth „ . . . . .	155,000,000
Ninth „ . . . . .	40,000,000	Eighteenth „ . . . . .	200,000,000
Nineteenth century, . . . . .		415,000,000	

NON-CHRISTIAN.		CHRISTIAN.	
Jews, . . . . .	8,000,000	Protestant, . . . . .	135,000,000
Mohammedans, . . . . .	173,000,000	Roman Catholic, . . . . .	195,000,000
Pagans, . . . . .	874,000,000	Greek Church, . . . . .	77,000,000
		Oriental Churches, . . . . .	8,000,000
	<u>1,055,000,000</u>		<u>415,000,000</u>
Population of the world, . . . . .		1,470,000,000.	

## CHRONOLOGICAL SUMMARY.

EVENTS IN PALESTINE.	MATTHEW.	MARK.	LUKE.
<b>Hyrcanus and Aristobulus, Maccabean princes</b> , the sons of <i>Alexandra</i> , rival candidates for the high-priesthood and supreme rule in Palestine, . . . . .	...	...	...
<b>Antipater</b> , an <i>Idumean</i> , the father of <i>Herod</i> , persuades <i>Hyrcanus</i> to appeal to <b>Pompey the Great</b> , . . . . .	...	...	...
<i>Aristobulus</i> refuses to submit, is besieged in the temple by <i>Pompey</i> and overcome; 12,000 Jews slain; <i>Hyrcanus</i> , <b>high priest</b> and <b>ethnarch of Judea</b> only, and <i>tributary to Rome</i> ; <i>Galilee</i> annexed to <i>Syria</i> ; <b>Samaria</b> under separate rule. <b>Beginning of Roman domination</b> , . . . . .	...	...	...
<i>Julius Cæsar</i> makes <b>Antipater</b> <i>procurator</i> of Judea, Samaria, and Galilee; <b>Hyrcanus</b> still <i>high priest</i> and <i>ethnarch</i> . <b>Beginning of Herodian rule</b> ; end of <b>Maccabean</b> , . . . . .	...	...	...
Antipater poisoned, . . . . .	...	...	...
After much intriguing, <b>Herod</b> (who married <b>Mariamne</b> , grand-daughter of <i>Hyrcanus</i> , 34 B.C.) made <i>king of the Jews</i> by the Roman senate, . . . . .	...	...	...
<b>The high-priesthood</b> separated from <i>civil rule</i> . <i>Hyrcanus</i> disqualified by mutilation. <b>Herod</b> appoints—(1) <i>Ananel</i> of a Babylonian high-priestly family; (2) <i>Aristobulus</i> , a Maccabean, soon afterwards murdered. <i>Herod</i> degrades the high-priesthood, and appoints and removes at pleasure, . . . . .	...	...	...
<b>Hillel</b> and <b>Shammai</b> at the head of rival schools of Jewish scribes, . . . . .	...	...	...
<b>Mariamne</b> murdered by <i>Herod</i> , . . . . .	...	...	...
<b>Herod</b> confirmed in possession of <i>Judea</i> , <i>Galilee</i> , <i>Samaria</i> , <i>Perea</i> , <i>Gaulonitis</i> , and <i>Idumea</i> , . . . . .	...	...	...

JOHN.	PLACE.	DATE.	CONTEMPORARY EVENTS OUTSIDE PALESTINE.
...	Jerusalem.	69 B.C.	
...	...	68 B.C.	
		67 B.C.	<b>Pompey</b> cleared the Mediter- ranean of pirates.
		66 B.C.	<i>Pompey</i> defeated Mithridates.
...	...	64-63 B.C. 63 B.C.	<b>Cicero</b> consul — conspiracy of Catiline.
		60 B.C.	<b>First Triumvirate</b> at Rome — <i>Pompey</i> , <i>Crassus</i> , <i>Cæsar</i> .
		48 B.C.	<i>Pompey</i> defeated at <i>Pharsalia</i> ; <b>Julius Cæsar</b> sole ruler at Rome.
...	...	47 B.C. 44 B.C.	<i>Julius Cæsar</i> assassinated at Rome.
...	...	43 B.C.	<b>Second Triumvirate</b> — <i>Antony</i> <i>Lepidus</i> , <i>Octavius</i> .
		42 B.C.	Battle of Philippi.
...	...	36 B.C.	
		32 B.C.	
...	...	31 B.C.	<i>Battle of Actium</i> . <b>Octavius</b> master of the empire.
...	...	28 B.C. 27 B.C.	<b>Octavius</b> made <b>Augustus</b> by the senate.
...	...	24 B.C.	<i>Æneid</i> of <b>Virgil</b> and <i>Odes</i> of <b>Horace</b> published.
		19 B.C.	<b>Virgil</b> died.

EVENTS IN PALESTINE.	MATTHEW.	MARK.	LUKE.
<b>I.—GOSPEL OF THE INFANCY.</b>			
Angel announced birth of <i>John</i> to <i>Zacharias</i> , . . . . .	...	...	i. 5-25
Angel announced birth of <i>Jesus</i> to <i>Mary</i> , . . . . .	...	...	i. 26-38
<i>Mary</i> visits <i>Elizabeth</i> , . . . . .	...	...	i. 39-56
<b>Birth of John the Baptist</b> , . . . . .	...	...	i. 57-80
Angel appears to <i>Joseph</i> , . . . . .	i. 18-25	...	...
<i>Joseph</i> and <i>Mary</i> go to <i>Bethlehem</i> , . . . . .	...	...	ii. 1-5
<b>Jesus born.</b> Angels and shepherds, . . . . .	...	...	ii. 6-20
<i>Jesus</i> <b>circumcised</b> ; <b>presented</b> in the temple, . . . . .	...	...	ii. 21-38
The <i>Magi</i> come to see <i>Jesus</i> , . . . . .	ii. 1-12	...	...
The flight to <i>Egypt</i> , . . . . .	ii. 13-18	...	...
<b>Herod dies</b> , . . . . .	...	...	...
<b>Archælaus</b> in <i>Judea</i> , <i>Samaria</i> , and <i>Idumea</i> ; <b>Herod Antipas</b> in <i>Galilee</i> and the <i>Perea</i> ; <i>Philip</i> in <i>Gaulonitis</i> . <i>Joseph</i> and <i>Mary</i> return from <i>Egypt</i> to <i>Nazareth</i> , . . . . .	ii. 19-23	...	ii. 39-40
<i>Rabbi Hillel dies.</i> <b>Judea a Roman province</b> , . . . . .	...	...	...
<b>Jesus goes up to the Passover, being twelve years old</b> , . . . . .	...	...	ii. 41-52
Revolt of <i>Judas</i> of <i>Galilee</i> . <i>Valerius Gratus</i> the procurator deposes four high priests in eleven years ( <i>Annas</i> one of them), and appoints <i>Joseph Calaphas</i> , . . . . .	...	...	...
<b>II.—THE PREPARATION AND FIRST YEAR OF MINISTRY COMPARATIVELY OBSCURE IN JUDEA AND GALILEE.</b>			
<i>John the Baptist</i> and his message, . . . . .	iii. 1-12	i. 1-8	iii. 1-18
<b>Jesus is baptized</b> , . . . . .	iii. 13-17	i. 9-11	iii. 21-23
The temptation, . . . . .	iv. 1-11	i. 12, 13	iv. 1-13
Deputation of scribes and Pharisees to <i>John</i> , . . . . .	...	...	...
<i>John's</i> witness for <i>Jesus</i> , . . . . .	...	...	...
Two of <i>John's</i> disciples follow <i>Jesus</i> , and remain with Him, . . . . .	...	...	...



JOHN.	PLACE.	DATE.	CONTEMPORARY EVENTS OUTSIDE PALESTINE.
...			
...			
...	...	Early in 3 B.C.	
...	...	Spring 3 B.C.	
...	...	3 B.C.	
...	...	"	
...	Bethlehem.	Autumn 3 B.C.	
...	Jerusalem.	3 B.C.	
...	...	2 B.C.	
...	...	"	
...	...	February or March B.C. 1	
...	Nazareth.	A.D. 1	
...	...	A.D. 6	
...	...	A.D. 8	Banishment of <b>Ovid</b> .
...	Jerusalem.	April A.D. 10	
...	...	June A.D. 14	<b>Tiberius</b> emperor.
...	...	A.D. 14-16	Campaigns of Germanicus against <b>Arminius</b> .
...	...	A.D. 18	Death of <i>Ovid</i> .
...	...	A.D. 25	<i>Pontius Pilate</i> appointed pro- curator by the influence of Sejanus.
...	...	A.D. 27	<b>Tiberius</b> retires to Capræ and governs there in jealous seclu- sion; <b>Sejanus</b> the prompter and minister of his tyrannies.
...	Wilderness and Perea.	A.D. 28	
i. 32-34	Jordan near Jericho ford.	June A.D. 29	Death of the Empress Livia.
...	Wilderness of Judea — Quarantania.	"	Plots of Sejanus to secure the throne by alliance with the family of Tiberius and by the deaths of the relatives of the emperor.
i. 19-28	Bethany be- yond Jordan.	July A.D. 29	
i. 15-34	"	"	
i. 35-42	Bethabara near Beth- shean ford.	"	

EVENTS IN PALESTINE.	MATTHEW.	MARK.	LUKE.
Jesus goes to Galilee; Philip, Nathanael.	...	...	...
Nazareth to Cana—Water turned to wine, . . . . .	...	...	...
Cana to Capernaum, . . . . .	...	...	...
<i>Jesus goes to Jerusalem.—First Pass-over,</i> . . . . .	...	...	...
First cleansing of the temple, . . . . .	...	...	...
Miracles at Jerusalem—Disciples, . . . . .	...	...	...
Nicodemus comes to Jesus, . . . . .	...	...	...
From Jerusalem to Ænon—Troubles with the disciples of John—Witness of John, . . . . .	...	...	...
Returns to Galilee through Samaria, . . . . .	...	...	...
Interview with woman of Samaria, . . . . .	...	...	...
In Galilee—Nobleman's son, . . . . .	...	...	...
<i>Jesus goes to Jerusalem.—Second Pass-over,</i> . . . . .	...	...	...
The paralytic at Bethesda—The Pharisees and the Sabbath— <i>Jews seek to kill Jesus,</i> . . . . .	...	...	...
Jesus hears that John is imprisoned—He returns to Galilee, . . . . .	iv. 12	i. 14	iv. 14
III.—MINISTRY IN GALILEE—YEAR OF POPULARITY.			
<i>First sojourn in Capernaum—Preaching the kingdom—Miraculous draught of fishes—Call of four disciples,</i> . . . . .	iv. 13-22	i. 14-20	iv. 14, v. 1-11
Demoniac cured in synagogue, . . . . .	...	i. 21-28	iv. 31-37
Cure of Peter's wife's mother and others, . . . . .	viii. 14-17	i. 29-34	iv. 38-41
<i>First preaching tour through Galilee,</i> . . . . .	iv. 23-25	i. 35-39	iv. 42-44
A leper cleansed on the journey, . . . . .	viii. 1-4	i. 40-45	v. 12-16
<i>Second sojourn in Capernaum—Beginning of conflict with Galilean scribes.</i> . . . . .	...	...	...
Cure of paralytic, . . . . .	ix. 2-8	ii. 1-12	v. 17-26
Call of Matthew or Levi, . . . . .	ix. 9-13	ii. 13-17	v. 27-32
Discourse on Fasting, . . . . .	ix. 14-17	ii. 18-22	v. 33-39
Plucking ears of corn on the Sabbath, . . . . .	xii. 1-8	ii. 23-28	vi. 1-5
The man with withered hand healed, . . . . .	xii. 9-14	iii. 1-6	vi. 6-11
Open-air preaching—Miracles, . . . . .	xii. 15-21	iii. 7-12	...
<i>Second preaching tour through Galilee—Choice of apostles,</i> . . . . .	x. 2-4	iii. 13-19	vi. 12-19
Sermon on the Mount, . . . . .	v. 1-viii. 1	...	vi. 20-49

JOHN.	PLACE.	DATE.	CONTEMPORARY EVENTS OUTSIDE PALESTINE.
i. 43-51	Bethabara, near Beth- shean ford.	July A.D. 29	Through his intrigues, the younger Drusus was disgraced and murdered.
ii. 1-11	Cana.	July-August	
ii. 1-12	Capernaum.	A.D. 29	
ii. 13	Jerusalem.	April A.D. 30	
ii. 14-22	"	"	Execution of Asinius Gallus, and other friends of Agrippina.
ii. 23-25	"	"	
iii. 1-21	"	"	
iii. 22-36	Ænon.	May-Dec. A.D. 30	
iv. 1-4	...	Dec. A.D. 30	Sejanus is betrothed to Livilla.
iv. 5-42	Sychar.	"	
iv. 43-54	Nazareth,	Dec.-March	
...	Cana, etc.	A.D. 30-31	
v. 1	Jerusalem.	April A.D. 31	Sejanus and Tiberius consuls.
v. 2-47	Jerusalem.	"	
...	Nazareth.	April-May A.D. 31	Tiberius suspicious of Sejanus; premonitions of the minister's disgrace.
...	... [naum.	A.D. 31	
...	Near Caper- Capernaum.	"	Sejanus plots to murder the emperor. The conspiracy dis- covered.
...	"	"	
...	Through	A.D. 31	
...	Galilee.	"	
...	"	"	
...	Capernaum.	Summer A.D. 31	
...	Capernaum.	"	
...	Capernaum.	Summer A.D. 31	
...	Capernaum.	" "	
...	Capernaum.	" "	
...	Capernaum.	" "	
...	Near	" "	
...	Capernaum.	" "	
...	High land behind Capernaum.	" "	

EVENTS IN PALESTINE.	MATTHEW.	MARK.	LUKE.
<i>Third sojourn in Capernaum—</i>			
Healing the centurion's servant, . . .	viii. 5-13	...	vii. 1-10
<i>Third preaching tour through Galilee—</i>			
To Nain—Widow's son raised, . . .	...	...	vii. 11-17
Message from John the Baptist, . . .	xi. 2-30	...	vii. 18-35
Jesus dines with Simon the Pharisee			
—Anointed, . . . . .	...	...	vii. 36-50
Continues His circuit in Galilee, . .	...	...	viii. 1-3
<i>Fourth sojourn in Capernaum—</i>			
Heals a blind and dumb demoniac, .	xii. 22-45	iii. 20-30	xi. 14-36
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The true kindred, . . . . .	xii. 46-50	iii. 31-35	viii. 19-21
<i>Fourth preaching tour in Galilee—</i>			
Parables of the Kingdom—			
The Sower, . . . . .	xiii. 1-23	iv. 1-25	viii. 4-18
The Tares, . . . . .	xiii. 24-30, 34-43	...	...
The Seed, . . . . .	...	iv. 26-29	...
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The Pearl—The Net, . . . . .	xiii. 44-53	...	...
Stilling the storm, . . . . .	viii. 18-27	iv. 35-41	viii. 22-25
The Gerasene demoniacs, . . . .	viii. 28-ix. 1	v. 1-21	...
<i>Fifth sojourn at Capernaum—</i>			
The daughter of Jairus—Woman			
with issue, . . . . .	ix. 18-26	v. 22-43	viii. 40-56
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News of murder of John the Baptist, .	xiv. 1-12	vi. 14-29	ix. 7-9
<i>Sixth sojourn at Capernaum—</i>			
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<i>First flight into dominions of Philip—</i>			
Across sea—Feeding five thousand, .	xiv. 13-21	vi. 30-44	ix. 10-17
Walking on the water, . . . . .	xiv. 22-36	vi. 45-56	...
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Teaches in synagogue—Many are			
offended, . . . . .	...	...	...
Scribes from Jerusalem—Traditions			
about eating, . . . . .	xv. 1-20	vii. 1-23	...
<i>Second flight to Tyre and Sidon—</i>			
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Through Decapolis—Miracles—			
Deaf and dumb man—Four			
thousand fed, . . . . .	xv. 29-38	viii. 1-9	...
Across the lake to Dalmanutha, . . .	xv. 39	viii. 10	...

JOHN.	PLACE.	DATE.	CONTEMPORARY EVENTS OUTSIDE PALESTINE.
...	Capernaum.	Mid-Summer A.D. 31	
...	Nain.	" "	
...	Nain.	" "	
...	Near Nain.	" "	
...	Galilee.	" "	
...	Capernaum.	Autumn A.D. 31	
...	Capernaum.	" "	
...	Capernaum.	" "	
...	By the Lake.	" "	Sejanus arrested and put to death, October 31, A.D.
...	"	" "	
...	"	" "	
...	"	" "	
...	"	" "	
...	"	" "	
...	The Lake. Gergesa.	" "	
...	Capernaum.		
...	Capernaum.		
...	Nazareth.		
...	At Machærus.		
...	...	Winter A.D. 31-32	
vi. 1-14	Plain of Butaiha.	April A.D. 32	
vi. 15-21	S. Lake.	" "	<i>Livilla</i> put to death privately.
vi. 22-vii. 1	Capernaum.	Early Summer A.D. 32.	
...	Capernaum.	" "	<b>Tiberius</b> leaves Capreæ for Rome, but has not courage to enter the capital: goes back to Capreæ, and lives there his wretched life.
...	Tyre and Sidon	Summer A.D. 32	
...	Near Gergesa.	" "	
...	S.E. of Lake.	" "	
...	...	A.D. 32	

EVENTS IN PALESTINE.	MATTHEW.	MARK.	LUKE.
<i>Return to Capernaum</i> (eighth sojourn) (?), . . . . .	...	...	...
The Pharisees ask a sign, . . .	xvi. 1-4	viii. 11, 12	...
<i>Third flight to territories of Philip</i> , . . .	...	...	...
Across the lake to Bethsaida-Julias, . . .	xvi. 5	viii. 13	...
Leaven of the Pharisees, . . . . .	xvi. 6-12	viii. 13-21	...
Blind man healed, . . . . .	...	viii. 22-26	...
To Cæsarea Philippi, . . . . .	xvi. 13	viii. 27	...
Peter's confession, . . . . .	xvi. 13-20	viii. 27-30	ix. 18-21
First clear prediction of the Passion, . . .	xvi. 21-28	viii. 31-ix. 1	ix. 22-27
Transfiguration, . . . . .	xvii. 1-13	ix. 2-13	ix. 28-36
The demoniac boy, . . . . .	xvii. 14-21	ix. 14-29	ix. 37-43
Return through Galilee; Second prediction of the Passion, . . .	xvii. 22, 23	ix. 30-32	ix. 44, 45
<i>Return to Capernaum</i> (ninth sojourn), . . .	xvii. 24	ix. 33	...
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Disciples taught humility and tolerance, . . . . .	xviii. 1-35	ix. 33-50	ix. 46-50
<b>B. Period of Work in Perea and Judea.</b>			
<i>Jesus goes secretly to Jerusalem—</i>			
To feast of Tabernacles, . . . . .	...	...	...
Discourses in the temple; attempt to arrest, . . . . .	...	...	...
Nicodemus tries to protect Jesus, . . . . .	...	...	...
Retirement to Mount of Olives, . . . . .	...	...	...
[The adulteress], . . . . .	...	...	...
Discourses; threatened stoning, . . . . .	...	...	...
Blind man healed; discourses, . . . . .	...	...	...
Christ the Door, and the Good Shepherd, . . . . .	...	...	...
<i>Return to Galilee.</i>			
<i>Last Journey to Jerusalem—Feast of Dedication</i> , . . . . .	...	...	...
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The Lord's Prayer, . . . . .	...	...	xi. 1-13

JOHN.	PLACE.	DATE.	CONTEMPORARY EVENTS OUTSIDE PALESTINE.
...	...	A.D. 32	
...	...	"	
...	...	"	
...	...	"	
...	...	"	
...	Bethsaida- Julias.	"	
...	...	"	
...	Near Cæsarea Philippi.	"	
...	" "	"	
...	M'tain range of Hermon.	"	
...	Ft. of Hermon	"	
...	Galilee.	"	
...	...	"	
...	Capernaum.	"	
...	Capernaum.	"	
vii. 1-10	Jerusalem.	Autumn A.D. 32	
vii. 11-46	Jerusalem.	" "	
vii. 47-52	Jerusalem.	" "	
viii. 1	Olivet.	" "	
[viii. 2-11]	Jerusalem.	" "	
viii. 12-59	Jerusalem.	" "	
ix.	Jerusalem.	" "	
x. 1-21	Jerusalem.		
x. 22	...	Winter 32	
...	Ginea.	"	
...	"	"	
...	Ginea & Perea.	"	
...	...	"	
...	...	"	
...	...	"	
...	Perea.	"	
...	"	"	
...	"	"	
...	"	"	
...	"	"	
...	"	"	

EVENTS IN PALESTINE.	MATTHEW.	MARK.	LUKE.
The dumb demoniac healed, . . .	...	...	xi. 14-26
Pharisees accuse Him, . . .	...	...	xi. 27-36
Dines with a Pharisee ; hypocrisy,	...	...	xi. 37-54
Leaven of the Pharisees, . . .	...	...	xii. 1-12
The rich fool ; discourses, . . .	...	...	xii. 13-59
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Upon the way : Good Samaritan ; Bethany ; Martha and Mary, . . .	...	...	x. 25-42
In Jerusalem : Second attempt to stone Him, . . .	...	...	...
<i>Flight to the Perea.</i> . . .	...	...	...
Dines with Pharisee on Sabbath : miracle, . . .	...	...	xiv. 1-6
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The message that Lazarus is ill, . .	...	...	...
Raising of Lazarus, . . .	...	...	...
Jewish council summoned ; resolves on Jesus' death, . . .	...	...	...
<i>Flight to Ephraim,</i> . . .	...	...	...
From Ephraim to Bethany, . . .	...	x. 31	...
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Place in the Kingdom, . . .	xx. 20-28	x. 35-45	...
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Rulers conspire to slay Lazarus, .	...	...	...
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<i>Monday,</i> . . .	...	...	...
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The temple cleansed, . . .	xxi. 12-16	xi. 15-18	xix. 45-48
Back to Bethany, . . .	...	xi. 19	...
<i>Tuesday,</i> . . .	...	...	...
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JOHN.	PLACE.	DATE.	CONTEMPORARY EVENTS OUTSIDE PALESTINE.
...	Perea.	Winter 32	
...	"	"	
...	"	"	
...	"	"	
...	"	"	
...	"	"	
...	"	"	
x. 22-24	"	"	
...	Jericho.	"	
x. 25-39	Jerusalem.	Dec. 32	
x. 40-42	Near Jericho Ford.		
...	Perea.		
xi. 1-6	"	Early "spring A.D. 33	
xi. 7-46	"	" "	
xi. 47-53	Jerusalem.	" "	
xi. 54, 55	Ephraim.	" "	
...	...	" "	
...	...	March A.D. 33	
...	...	" "	
...	Jericho.	" "	
...	"		
xii. 9	Bethany.		
xii. 10-11	"		
xii. 1-8			
...	Jerusalem.	Mar. 29 (Old Style) A.D. 33	
xii. 12-19	"		
...	Bethany.	" "	
...	...	Mar. 30 A.D. 33	
...	Jerusalem.		
...	"		
...	...		
...	...	Mar. 31 A.D. 33	

EVENTS IN PALESTINE.	MATTHEW.	MARK.	LUKE.
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<i>Thursday,</i> . . . . .	...	...	...
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'The Passover and the Lord's Supper, . . . . .	xxvi. 21-29	xiv. 17-26	xxii. 15-30
Jesus' farewell discourses and intercessory prayer, . . . . .	...	...	...
Foretells the fall of Peter, . . .	xxvi. 31-35	xiv. 26-31	xxii. 31-38
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3. To Peter, . . . . .	...	...	xxiv. 34
4. To two disciples, . . . . .	...	xvi. 12, 13	xiii. 13-35

JOHN.	PLACE.	DATE.	CONTEMPORARY EVENTS OUTSIDE PALESTINE.
xii. 20-50	Jerusalem.		
...	"		
...	Olivet.		
...	...	April 1 A.D. 33	Agrippina starves herself to death.
...	Bethany.		
...	...	Apr. 2 A.D. 33	
...	Jerusalem.		The cruelties, mad suspicion, and licentious life of the emperor suggest that he is insane.
xiii. 1-38	"		
xiv. 1- xvii. 26			
...			
xviii. 1, 2	Olivet.		
xviii. 3-12	"		
...	...	April 3 (Old Style) A.D. 33	
xviii. 12-24	Jerusalem.		
xviii. 15-18, 25-27	"		
xviii. 28- xix. 15	"		
...	"		
xix. 16-29	Jerusalem.		
xix. 30-37	"	April 3 (Old Style) A.D. 33	
xix. 38-42	"		
xix. 42	"	Apr. 4 A.D. 33	
...			
...	Jerusalem.	Apr. 5 A.D. 33	
xx. 1, 2	"	" "	
xx. 3-10	"	" "	
...	"	" "	
xx. 11-18	"	" "	
...	"	" "	
...	"	" "	
...	Emmaus.	" "	

EVENTS IN PALESTINE.	MATTHEW.	MARK.	LUKE.
5. To the <i>Ten</i> —Thomas absent, .	...	...	xxiv. 36-49
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7. To seven apostles, . . . . .	...	...	...
8. To five hundred disciples, .	xxviii. 16-20	...	...
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<b>First Persecution</b> —Martyrdom of Stephen— <b>Conversion of Saul</b> , . . . . .	Acts vii.-ix.
<i>Herod Agrippa I.</i> succeeds to Gaulonitis, . . . . .	...
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<i>First preaching to the Gentiles</i> , . . . . .	Acts x.
<b>Second Persecution</b> — <i>James beheaded</i> — <i>Herod Agrippa</i> dies, . . . . .	Acts xii.
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<b>Felix</b> procurator, . . . . .	...
<b>Paul's third missionary journey</b> (four years) ( <i>Galatians, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Romans</i> ), . . . . .	Acts xviii. 23-xxi.
Revolt of the <i>Sicarii</i> , headed by an Egyptian, . . . . .	Acts xxi. 38
<b>Festus</b> procurator ( <i>Paul</i> brought before him), . . . . .	Acts xxv.
<b>Paul a prisoner at Rome</b> ( <i>Ephesians, Colossians, Philemon, Philippians</i> ), . . . . .	Acts xxvii.-xxviii.
<b>Paul released by Nero</b> , . . . . .	...
<b>Gessius Florus</b> procurator (65 A.D.)— <b>Revolt of the Jews</b> (66 A.D.), . . . . .	...
<i>Vespasian</i> general in Palestine— <i>Josephus</i> commands Jewish army, . . . . .	...
<b>Destruction of Jerusalem</b> by <i>Titus</i> , . . . . .	...

JOHN.	PLACE.	DATE.	CONTEMPORARY EVENTS OUTSIDE PALESTINE.
xx. 19-24	Sea of Galilee. Galilee.	May A.D. 33	
xx. 25-29			
xxi. 1-24			
...			
...	Bethany.	May A.D. 33	
...	"	" "	

DATE.	CONTEMPORARY EVENTS OUTSIDE PALESTINE.
June A.D. 33	
A.D. 34	<i>Pilate</i> recalled.
" 36	<b>Caligula</b> emperor on the death of <i>Tiberius</i> .
" 37	Invasion of Britain by Aulus Plautius.
" 40	<b>Claudius</b> emperor on the assassination of Caligula.
" 41	Banishment of <i>Seneca</i> .
" 44	War in <i>Britain</i> (43-51).
" 45	
" 51	War with <i>Caradoc</i> in <i>Britain</i> .
" 51	
" 52	Jews banished from Rome.
" 54	<b>Nero</b> emperor.
" 59	Nero murders Agrippa.
" 60	
" 61	War with <i>Boadicea</i> in <i>Britain</i> .
" 63	
" 64	Great Fire at Rome— <b>First Roman Persecution</b> of the Church.
" 67	
" 68	<b>Galba</b> emperor
" 69	<b>Otho</b> and <b>Vitellius</b> emperors
" 69	<b>Vespasian</b> emperor.
" 70	} Empire convulsed with civil war.

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